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PAGE 70

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PAGE 17

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KNIVES**

PAGE 62

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JULY 2008  
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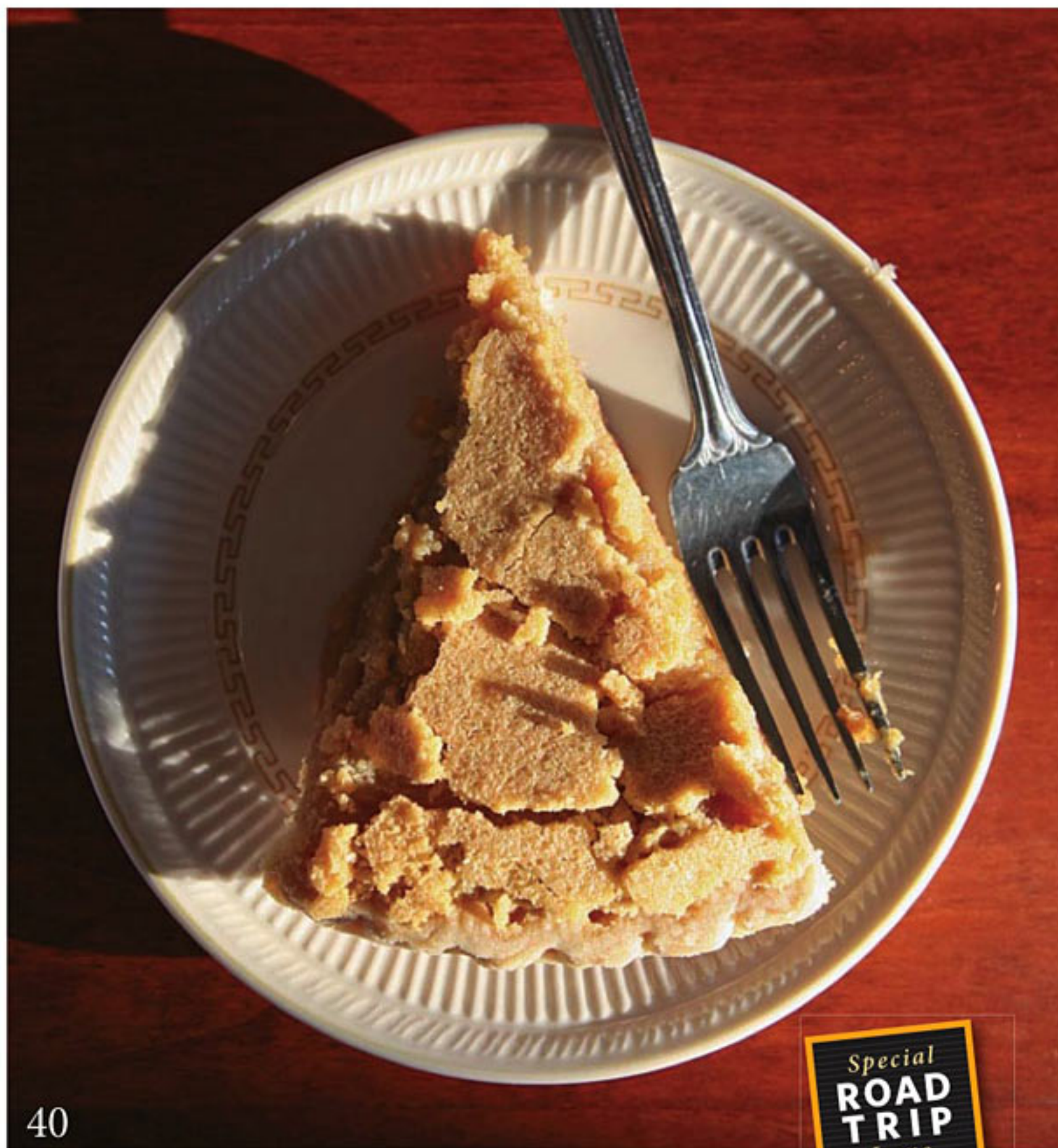
See more of Rick's story at [CaliforniaAvocado.com](http://CaliforniaAvocado.com)

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# SAVEUR



40

## COVER

Crisp fried chicken, an American summer classic.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI

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## FEATURES

## WE HIT THE ROAD HUNGRY

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## MASTER OF THE BLADE

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC RISBERG

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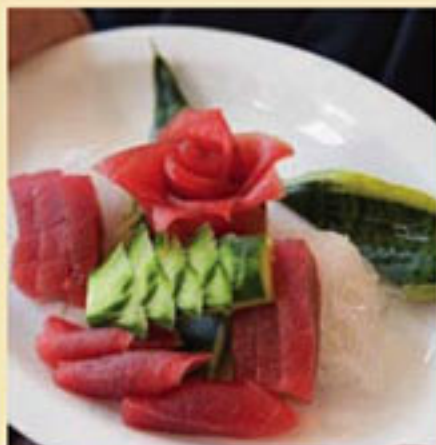




# This Month at SAVEUR.COM



This month at **SAVEUR.COM** you'll find a detailed road-trippers' guide to **Oregon wine country**; a recipe for **Vietnamese green papaya salad**; a conversation with Cheryl and Bill Jamison, authors of the travelogue ***Around the World in 80 Dinners***; a roundup of **classic camping cookbooks**; a slide show of the **best picnic recipes** from the SAVEUR kitchen archives; and many other exclusive online features.



## More Morimoto

Learn to cut sashimi like a pro with our step-by-step tutorial from chef Masaharu Morimoto.



## East Meets West

Explore the Asian markets and restaurants of central California through our interactive photo gallery.



## Great Plates

Taste your way across the U.S.A. with road trip recipes for a pine cone cocktail and fried turkey livers.

## PLUS

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ADVERTISING ARTISTS  
*Sommer Hatfield Coffin, Wendy Crenner, Shannon Mendis, Mike Rettew*





# SAVEUR

## PUBLISHER

*Merri Lee Kingsly, 212/219-4635*  
*merrilee.kingsly@bonniercorp.com*

CREATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR  
*Kristin Cohen, 212/219-4608*

MARKETING DIRECTOR  
*Karen Jensen, 212/219-4655*

NEW YORK ADVERTISING SALES  
*212/219-4616*

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE  
*Rick Johnson, 212/219-7413*

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE  
*Beth Bernstein, 908/654-5050*

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE  
*Mary Anne MacLean, 631/367-1988*

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA/NEVADA: *Steve Thompson,*  
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HAWAII: *Debbie Joseph, 808/739-2200*

DIRECTOR ONLINE/ENDEMIC  
*Erich Berger, 407/571-4925*  
*erich.berger@bonniercorp.com*

## THE MARKET

*Michelle Goode (Manager), 407/571-4871*  
*saveurmarket@bonniercorp.com*

## MARKETING

*Tanya Tarek-Torres (Sales Development Manager)*  
*Marcia Caton (Marketing Manager)*

MARKETING LIAISON  
*Donna Kohn Snow*

RESEARCH DIRECTOR  
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Emilia & Bologna, OCT 12-22

Tuscany & Umbria, OCT 26-NOV 4

Thailand, NOV 11-19



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# GRILLED LOBSTER TAILS WITH AVOCADO AND MANGO SALAD WITH CITRUS DRESSING

SERVES 4

- 3/4 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup orange juice, freshly squeezed
- 2 tbsp. lime juice, freshly squeezed
- 2 tsp. grated orange rind
- salt and freshly ground pepper
- 4 10-oz. lobster tails, thawed if frozen and cut in half lengthwise
- 4 cups salad greens
- 1 large avocado, peeled, pitted, and diced into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1 large mango, peeled, pitted, and diced into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup cucumber slices
- 1/2 small red onion, thinly sliced
- 8 lime wedges for garnish

1. To make the dressing, whisk together the olive oil, orange juice, lime juice, orange rind, and salt and pepper.
2. Brush the lobster tails with some of the citrus dressing and place lobster tails on the grill, meat side up. Grill for 5 minutes and turn over. Continue to cook for 2-3 minutes, or until the meat is cooked through in the center. Remove from grill and allow to rest for 3-4 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, toss the salad greens with 1/4 cup of the dressing and divide between 4 plates. Toss the avocado, mango, cucumber, and red onion together with the remaining dressing and divide between the 4 plates. Place 2 lobster halves on each plate and garnish with lime wedges, if desired.

Est. 1890

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# FIRST

## Blacktop Bliss

A lifelong love of food, born in the family station wagon

**I** WAS 11 YEARS OLD. It was mid-July, and it was hot. (Of course it was: we were in northern Arizona.) We'd been driving for hours. As a dun-colored high desert landscape rolled past, I nibbled on beef jerky and drank lukewarm 7-Up; it all made for a weirdly delicious, singularly American juxtaposition. When we finally approached the Grand Canyon at about three o'clock, my sleepiness gave way to exultation. The pink-orange landscape, seemingly impossible in its scale, was as great as my expectation had been; no, it was better, much better. My dad parked the car, and we all got out and looked down to the bottom. He snapped the photo you see at right. (My God, all that busy, striped and checkered clothing—what had my mom, the family wardrobe mistress, been thinking?) In the photo, my

right hand firmly grips the guardrail. Faced with all that natural magnificence—and the fear of falling into that giant hole—I felt my knees tremble. My soul trembled, too.

I have been addicted to road trips for as long as I can remember. As a kid, I found nothing more exciting than packing up the family station wagon and heading out into America, as my family did that July many years ago. Sometimes the purpose of our journeys was open-ended, and we just rambled aimlessly across the country for a week; other times, a specific destination awaited, as it did when we drove from our home in suburban Chicago to Corpus Christi, Texas, for Easter break to see the Gulf. Similarly, as an adult I have always felt the purest sense of happiness when I'm on the road with nothing in front of me save the dashboard of my Toyota pickup and a two-

lane blacktop. For the ten years that I lived in Los Angeles, a month didn't feel complete if I hadn't jumped into the car to lose myself for a day or two on some lonely desert highway, a can of smoked almonds from Trader Joe's at my side. Now that I live in New York, it's the Hudson Valley and the Adirondacks that beckon.

I suppose it's no accident that road travel is so fundamental to my existence. My dad, after all, was a traveling salesman for most of his adulthood, and his journeying set the rhythm for just about everything in our family's life, including where we spent our vacations and what we ate along the way. In fact, you could say those family road odysseys led to my own culinary awakening, for on them I had some of the most formative meals of my

childhood. There were humble repasts, like the fried clam sandwiches I tasted at a Howard Johnson's restaurant in Oklahoma and ordered again and again at countless other locations of that ubiquitous American chain. There were loftier experiences, too, like that of the four-course meal the family and I shared in 1976 at Commander's Palace in New Orleans. My first bite of the buttery, sweet barbecued shrimp served there was, at that moment, nothing less than earth shattering.

It was with those memories in mind that I joined up with *SAVEUR*'s food editor, Todd Coleman (another inveterate asphalt warrior) and set out last summer to report "Adventures in Good Eating" (page 40), which recounts a seven-state overland food quest. We hope reading it will start your own wheels turning. —JAMES OSELAND, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



The author, in the summer of 1974, with his mother, Bernice, at the Grand Canyon, in Arizona.



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# FARE

News and Novelties from the World of Food, plus Agenda and More

## Grains of Paradise

**T**HIS IS BERBER couscous," Sid Ali Lahlou told me, as we relaxed in the wood-trimmed dining room of his restaurant, Dar Lahlou, which opened two years ago in Algiers, the seaside capital of Algeria. Lahlou's family restaurant specializes in the cuisine of the Berbers, the semi-nomadic people who have inhabited North Africa for centuries. On the table sat bowls of tomato-tinted broth studded with carrots and chunks of slow-simmered lamb; alongside those dishes were two kinds of couscous—a pale yellow variety made from semolina wheat and a nuttier-tasting, darker variety made from barley, both of which were astonishingly fluffy and full-flavored. Lahlou's couscous dishes were presented differently from the Moroccan and Tunisian versions I've tried: the grains were served separately from the meat and vegetables in the customary Algerian way, he explained.

Lahlou should know a thing or two about couscous. His family has been producing the grains the old-fashioned way—that is, by hand—for



## FARE

the past ten years at a small factory, called Maison Lahlou, in the mountainous region of Kabylie, about 60 miles east of Algiers. Lahlou said the company aims to restore the honored Berber practice of hand-rolling couscous, not just from the usual wheat semolina but also from barley (the grain that Berber farmers originally used, before Arab invaders brought wheat to North Africa, in the 12th century) and even from acorns, corn, and rice.

Couscous is generally made by machines these days, but Lahlou knew that Berber home cooks in rural areas were still making it the traditional way, by rolling their palms and fingers over flour moistened with salted water to form granules, then passing them through fine sieves to sort the grains by size. It's the same method now used by the 25 workers employed full-time at the factory, as well as by the 400 or so local women who make couscous for the company in their homes during the busy summer season. "The key is working with the hands," Lahlou explained. It's a process that doesn't end at the factory. The cooks at Dar Lahlou rub the dried couscous between their moistened fingers before cooking it in perforated steamers, called *couscoussières*, that rest atop pots of boiling water or stew.

Last year, Maison Lahlou produced some 600 tons of couscous. Lahlou hopes to start exporting his product throughout Europe soon, but for now the handmade grains are sold only domestically and in France. In Algiers, the word is out. On Friday nights, every table at Dar Lahlou is filled with families communing over shared bowls of the Berber specialty. "We celebrate everything with couscous—births, engagements, weddings," Lahlou said, as he offered me another helping. "Couscous is our heritage." (For information about Lahlou's restaurant, see *THE PANTRY*, page 97.) —Jeff Koehler

## AGENDA

JUNE

1–20

## PINANGAT FESTIVAL

*Camalig, Philippines*

The town of Camalig takes such pride in the local specialty called pinangat—bundles of taro leaves filled with shrimp, salted fish, or pork and simmered in coconut milk—that it devotes an entire festival to the snack each year. Weeks of eating, music, dancing, and fireworks culminate in a cooking contest. Information: [tourism.albay.gov.ph/camaligfest.htm](http://tourism.albay.gov.ph/camaligfest.htm).



JUNE

14

## DUBLIN DR. PEPPER BIRTHDAY PARTY

*Dublin, Texas*

This year, soda pop fans will flock to the original Dr. Pepper factory (where the drink is still made with cane sugar, the product's original sweetener) to toast the beverage's 117th birthday. Attendees can partake of free chocolate cake, made with Dr. Pepper syrup, drink from a 15-foot-tall soda can, and tour the factory. Information: [www.dublindrpepper.com](http://www.dublindrpepper.com).

JUNE

17

Birthday:

## RUTH GRAVES WAKEFIELD

*Whitman, Massachusetts, 1903*

Culinary folklore places the birth of the chocolate chip cookie in the kitchen of one Ruth Wakefield, who was the proprietor of a local lodge called the Toll House Inn. Wakefield is said to have invented the cookie there in 1933, and its popularity soared after she gave Nestlé permission to print the recipe on packages for its bars of baking chocolate in 1939.



JUNE

21

Anniversary:

## MECHANICAL REAPER PATENTED

1834

Though mechanical grain cutters, called reapers, began appearing around 1800, it was with Cyrus H. McCormick's version that agriculture entered the industrial age. Older reapers simply cut and dropped grain; McCormick's cut, separated, and collected it, increasing production and, ultimately, positioning the American Midwest as the breadbasket to the world.



JULY

26

Anniversary:

## A.O.C. DESIGNATION AWARDED TO A CHEESE FOR THE FIRST TIME

*France, 1925*

On this day 83 years ago, the French government granted roquefort cheese, made in the limestone caves near Roquefort-sur-Soulzon, an A.O.C. (for *appellation d'origine contrôlée*) designation—the first ever awarded to a cheese—thereby preventing pretenders from using the roquefort name.

JULY

1–2

## BOCUSE D'OR EUROPE

*Stavanger, Norway*

This year, the prestigious culinary competition founded 21 years ago by the pioneering French chef Paul Bocuse (above) is adding a European round to scout young talent. Contenders from 20 countries will cook *Iron Chef* style, with local lamb and salmon as the theme ingredients, before a jury of celebrated chefs, including Juan Mari Arzak and Thomas Keller. Information: [www.bocusedor.com/europe](http://www.bocusedor.com/europe).

JULY

5–6

## FIESTA DE LA LAGOSTA

*A Guarda, Spain*

Once a year, the Galician coastal town of A Guarda, known as the lobster capital of Spain, is given over to a giddy celebration of the beloved local crustacean. Outdoor stands serve the seafood boiled alongside other regional specialties, like vino del rosál, a fresh, floral white wine, and roscón de yema, a cake made with sugar, milk, and egg yolks. Information: 34/986/614-546.

JULY

24–27

## 21ST ANNUAL OREGON BREWERS FESTIVAL

*Portland, Oregon*

Representatives from 72 breweries pour handcrafted brews for more than 60,000 beer lovers during one of the world's premier craft-beer events. Vintage and obscure styles reign: look for Collaborator, a limited-production beer made by Widmer Brothers Brewing Company using local home brewers' recipes. Information: [www.oregonbrewfest.com](http://www.oregonbrewfest.com).







## Sweet and Sour

No matter the season, my Hungarian-born grandmother's Bronx apartment always smelled of paprika and chicken fat, the scent of which permeated the upholstery and lingered in the air. Even in the heat of summer, Grandma Rose cooked Hungarian foods that were unapologetically hearty, like stuffed cabbage and *rakott krumppli*, a buttery potato-egg casserole. One perennial summer favorite broke the pattern, though: *meggye leves*, cold sour cherry soup.

As a kid, I always looked forward to that dish, which was served as a first course, studded with morello sour cherries and thickened with sour cream. Not only did it seem like a dessert disguised as an appetizer, but Grandma Rose made a game out of eating it: for every pit that my brother and I found in our bowls, she'd reward us with a shiny dime. Occasionally, we'd finish our soup not a dime richer, which meant that Grandma had run out of the handpicked morello cherries that my family would haul home from weekend expeditions to orchards in upstate New York; in those

instances, she'd use jarred, pitted Hungarian morellos instead.

The first few times I tried making *meggye leves* myself, I used sweet bings and rainiers (which are more widely available in most of the U.S. than sour cherries); the result was a sweeter soup. The soups I made with other sour cherry varieties, like the popular montmorency, were delicious but not as complex as I remembered. It quickly became clear to me why Hungarians have long prized the dark red, intensely flavored morello for *meggye leves* and for traditional strudels, tortes, and preserves. It's so distinctly different from sweet cherries, which are called *cseresznye* in Hungarian, that it goes by an entirely different name: *meggy*.

I confess that after amassing a piggybank full of dimes at Grandma's apartment, I began to suspect that she was deliberately planting a few extra unpitted cherries in her soup, but my suspicion has been laid to rest now that I make my own *meggye leves* each summer. Despite my best efforts, I still find plenty of pits in my bowl. —Emily Halpern

### METHOD

#### Meggye Leves

(Hungarian Chilled Cherry Soup)

Add two 24-oz. jars of pitted sour cherries (preferably morellos), with their juice, to a 4-quart saucepan. (Alternatively, you may use 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> lbs. fresh bing cherries, stemmed and pitted, or 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> lbs. frozen bing cherries with 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cups sour or regular cherry juice.) See page 97 for sources. Add 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, 1 cinnamon stick, and one 1/2"-thick slice of lemon. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until cherries are soft, about 5 minutes. In a small bowl, whisk together one 8-oz. container sour cream and 1/4 cup of hot cherry liquid from pan. Remove pan from heat; stir in sour cream mixture. Chill the soup. Serves 4-6.

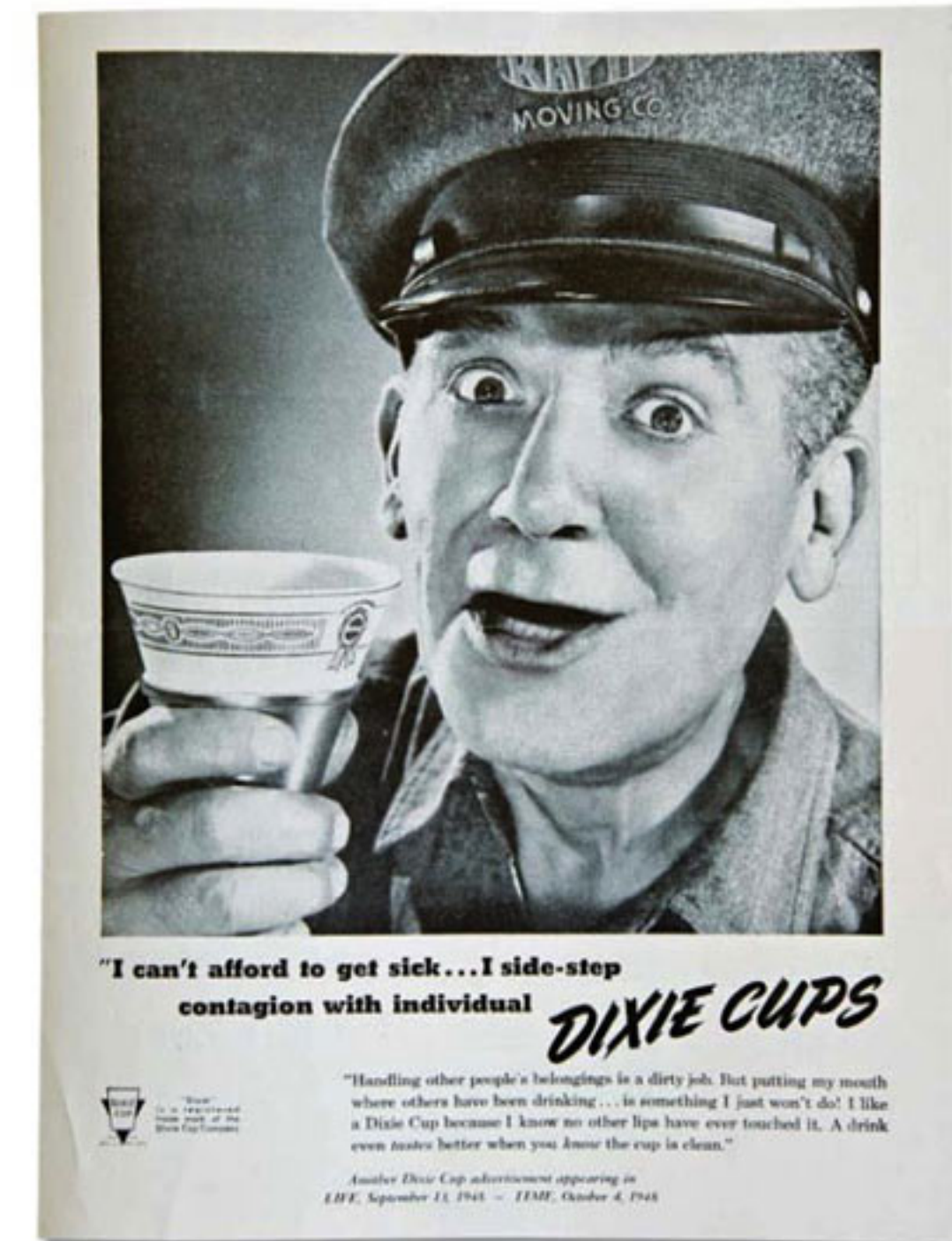


## FARE

# Dixieland

**T**HE SPECIAL Collections and College Archives of Lafayette College, in Easton, Pennsylvania, are full of curious and valuable artifacts, including letters from the Marquis de Lafayette to George Washington, first editions of Charles Dickens's work, and rare manuscripts on angling, to name a few. Among these are 18 cardboard boxes packed with contents considerably less highfalutin: nearly 2,000 different Dixie cups—those paper products found in countless offices, waiting rooms, and home kitchens and bathrooms across the country—from every decade of the 20th century. When I stumbled across the boxes, during the first year of my stint as a sociology professor at the college, I felt as though I'd discovered the remains of some great-aunt's long-forgotten picnic. There were nine-ounce cups imprinted with flower patterns, like those from which I used to sip Kool-Aid as a kid, as well as funnel-shaped snow cone holders, coffee "mugs" with paper handles glued to the side, and even tall, narrow vessels that were meant to be nestled into silver "holderettes".

I later learned that Dixie cups had once been manufactured in Easton and that the contents of those boxes consist of product samples that were lovingly collected by Hugh Moore, who co-founded the Dixie Cup Company,



originally called the American Water Supply Company of New England, in 1908. Diane Windham Shaw, the college's archivist, told me that the company got its start when Moore's brother-in-law, Lawrence Luellen, developed a paper cup in the hopes of abolishing the "tin dipper", the shared drinking cup that was chained to the

water fountains of train stations, schools, and railway cars. Early advertisements for the cups played on the public's fear of communicable diseases, with depictions of the Grim Reaper and communal cups shaped like skulls. After the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918, the Health Kup, as the first of Dixie's products was named, took off, al-

lowing the company to expand its operations and, ultimately, shift its attentions to restaurateurs, homemakers, and office managers, to whom the cups were marketed as stylish and modern conveniences. ("As beautiful as fine porcelain," read one 1950s advertisement.)

Fanciful marketing and product diversification followed: I found disposable beer tumblers from the 1950s; collectible lids from the ice cream cups that Dixie introduced in the 1930s, emblazoned with the likenesses of film stars and baseball legends; cups from the 1940s that urged consumers, "Defend America"; and photos documenting the company's products in various contexts—one showed Truman drinking out of a Dixie cup aboard an aircraft carrier.

Perusing the vast collection (which will be on display at Lafayette College this fall, to celebrate the Dixie Cup Company's centennial), I witnessed the gradual cultural embrace of these everyday objects and the way the company's designers and marketers responded to changing styles and mores. And though the cups themselves may be disposable, they have acquired a decidedly permanent value: unopened packages of cups printed with pop icons like *Star Wars* characters are now being vigorously traded on eBay. (See *THE PANTRY*, page 97, for information about the exhibit.)

—Caroline W. Lee



1923-24



1933



1934



1941



1949



ca. 1960



1976





Nature hides her

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# MARKET: KRABI, THAILAND

**Fresh Start** To the uninitiated visitor, the seemingly chaotic energy of a typical Thai market may give the impression of a free-for-all: machete-wielding men hacking coconuts amid a hodgepodge of stalls, hawkers of medicinal herbs touting cures for every imaginable ailment, the smells of incense and spices. But, as a Thai-American kid spending summers in Thailand with my family, I learned to navigate comfortably through the noisy pageant to seek out

mhu grob, a fried pork dish that many vendors prepare. To this day, a visit to a bustling market is the one activity that is guaranteed to bring my family together when I'm visiting them in Thailand. That is not to say that the look and feel of Thai food markets isn't changing dramatically. Take the Maharat market, in the southern Thai coastal town of Krabi. Rebuilt in 2004, the ten-year-old marketplace bears little outward resemblance to the ones I remember from my child-

hood. The neat and orderly rows of vendors are more evocative of a Western supermarket than of your average Southeast Asian bazaar, and sit-down dining areas seem designed to eliminate the practical art of walking and snacking while balancing armloads of plastic bags. And yet, the Maharat market still offers a lively, enriching experience that is quintessentially Thai. (See *THE PANTRY*, page 97, for information.)

—Diane Ruengsom

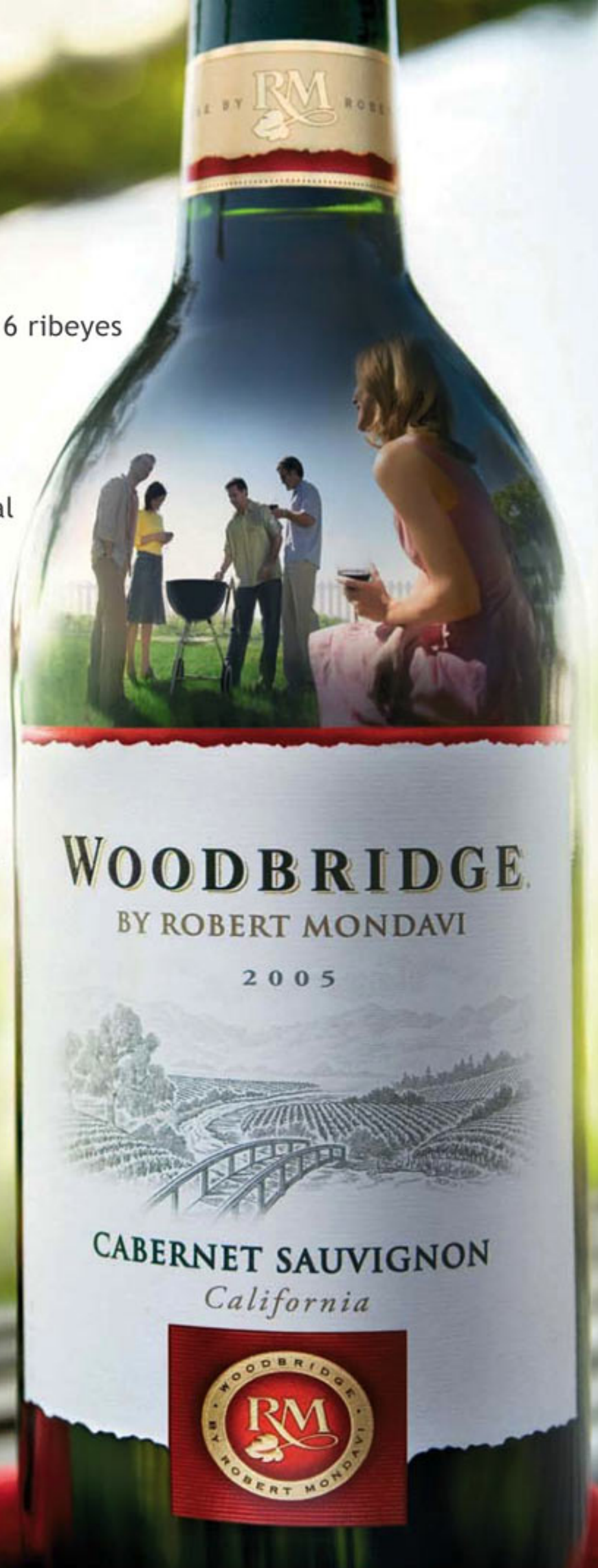


6 ribeyes

A bag of hickory charcoal

45 minutes until sunset

1 bottle of



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MAKE EVERY DAY A LITTLE LESS EVERYDAY

**WOODBIDGE.**  
BY ROBERT MONDAVI



## FARE

# Hot Stuff

**T**HE BEST PROOF I've found that spicy food keeps you cool is the combustible condiment known in the southern African nation of Mozambique as piri-piri. In the capital city, Maputo, I found refreshment during the sweltering month of January by drizzling the incendiary sauce on everything from steak and fish to omelettes and sautéed shrimp. It's as common in that city as ketchup is in the States—ever present in small glass bowls on the tables of restaurants both upscale and humble—and perhaps more dearly loved, for every cook claims his or her own version. When I asked Emmanuel Petrakakis, the owner of the 70-year-old restaurant Costa do Sol, for his recipe, he rattled off the main components—ground fresh chiles, olive oil, lime juice, garlic, and vinegar—but then demurred. “The rest,” he said, “is secret.” Jorge Jordão, the chef at a popular restaurant called Zambi, was more forthcoming about his secret ingredient: chopped ginger. Jordão explained that the sauce takes its name from the slender, red piri-piri chile



(also called African bird's-eye), though numerous other chile varieties are often used. Chiles grow abundantly across southern Africa, having arrived in the early 1500s with Portuguese traders. The term *piri-piri* is a Portuguese bastardization of *pili-pili*, which means hot pepper in Swahili, the lingua franca across much of eastern Africa. The Portuguese, who colonized Mozambique in the 16th century, took their love for the pepper, and the simple sauce made with it, to Portugal and beyond. Now you can find bottled piri-piri sauce all over the world; the version distributed by Nando's, a South African fast-food chain, is good. Still, it has nowhere near the refreshing kick of the fresh stuff. —Tyler D. Johnson

## METHOD

## Piri-Piri Sauce

This recipe is based on one by Jorge Jordão, the chef at Zambi, a restaurant in Maputo, Mozambique. We found red fresno chiles (see page 97 for a source) to be the best substitute for the more traditional, but harder-to-find, African bird's-eye chiles. In a blender, combine 10 red fresno chiles (seeded, if you like, for a milder sauce) with 6 tbsp. fresh lime juice, 4 tsp. dark brown sugar, 1 tbsp. olive oil, 1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh ginger, 1/2 tbsp. white wine vinegar, 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, and 2 cloves garlic and purée into a chunky sauce. Refrigerate, covered, for up to 2 weeks. Serve with chicken, steak, fish, or eggs. Makes 1 1/2 cups.

ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI



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[ilovemiamispice.com](http://ilovemiamispice.com)

XIII International Ballet  
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[internationalballetfestival.com](http://internationalballetfestival.com)

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# BOOK REVIEW

## The Seekers

A recent spate of journey books proves there are many paths to culinary enlightenment

BY SARAH KARNASIEWICZ



### METHOD

#### Wok-Charred Long Beans with Black Olives

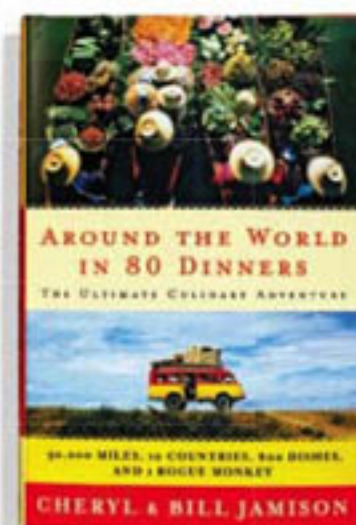
This recipe is based on one in *Around the World in 80 Dinners* by Cheryl and Bill Jamison (William Morrow, 2008). Cheryl, when she first had the dish, at the Hong Kong restaurant City Chiu Chow, was at once intrigued and baffled by its use of black olives (a little-known but traditional Chinese ingredient), until it dawned on her that their "salty accent lent the dish a pungency similar to Asian shrimp paste". For more about long beans, see page 96. Trim and cut 1½ lbs. long beans into 2"-long pieces. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add beans; cook until crisp-tender, 1-2 minutes. Using tongs, transfer beans to a bowl of ice water; chill. Drain beans. Heat 3 tbsp. canola oil in a 12" nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add 4 oz. ground pork; break into small pieces. Cook pork until browned, about 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer pork to a plate, leaving fat in skillet. Raise heat to high; add beans and cook, without stirring, until hot, about 2 minutes. Toss beans; cook, without stirring, until caramelized, 1 minute more. Add 2 tbsp. minced garlic, 2 tbsp. minced ginger, and 1 minced Thai chile; cook for 1 minute. Add ⅓ cup chicken broth, 2 tbsp. Chinese black or balsamic vinegar, and 1 tbsp. soy sauce; cook until almost evaporated, about 2 minutes. Add ½ lb. halved and pitted dry-cured black olives and reserved pork; cook for 1 minute more.

**F**ORTY-SIX YEARS AGO, in *Travels with Charley*, his love letter to the American road, John Steinbeck called wanderlust a chronic disease, one that cannot be shaken off by the routines of work or the good sense of maturity. Indeed, writers like him have a long and documented history of being bitten by the travel bug, and their observations fill the pages of a literary canon that stretches from Lord Byron's Grand Tour-inspired stanzas through Jack Kerouac's jazz-fueled riffs, on into the sun-kissed memoirs of writers like Peter Mayle (*A Year in Provence*) and Elizabeth Gilbert (*Eat, Pray, Love*). Through centuries and across continents, whether a hero is nursing a broken heart or is hungry for enlightenment, the prescription is always the same: Head for the road.

I should admit, though, that some of my most gratifying wanderings have been driven less by a thirst for personal transformation than by a hankering for the perfect basket of fried clams, a transcendent bowl of tomato soup, or just a yen to learn the cuisine of a distant land. I'm hardly alone. We live in a day and age when gastro-tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the travel industry and where cooking shows are abandoning kitchen studios in favor of formats that take viewers on the road in search of great food. Add to these realities the recent bumper crop of culinary-themed travel tales crowding bookstore shelves, and it seems that the true hallmark of a modern adventurer is a healthy appetite.

A prime case in point is ***Around the World in 80 Dinners: The Ultimate Culinary Adventure*** (William Morrow, \$24.95), which follows James Beard Award-winning cookbook authors Cheryl and Bill Jamison as they trek 50,000 miles around the planet to commemorate their 20th wedding anniversary. Best known for their exhaustively researched regional American cookbooks—such as the barbecue bible *Smoke and Spice* (Harvard Common Press, 1994) and *The Border Cookbook* (Harvard Common Press, 1995), a tribute to Southwestern home cooking—the Jamisons demonstrate that they can apply the same friendly, ravenous curiosity to the subject of water beetle chile paste that they have to Texas brisket.

As they leapfrog from South Africa to Singapore in search of local delicacies, the authors prove again and again that serendipity is the traveler's strongest ally: many of their most memorable meals issue from the hands of generous strangers, like the Balinese tour guide who invites them into his home to sample his wife's bebek betutu (roast duck). Fluid storytelling does not always come naturally to them—the pace drags at times, when the authors recount in too much detail their negotiations with airline employees, say, or their bouts of food-borne illness—but still, readers





will be rewarded. Some of the book's greatest gifts are its recipes, which the Jamisons collected on the road and cleverly adapted to make their own; two of my favorites are the Thai beef khao soi seasoned with New Mexico chiles and the wok-charred Chaozhou-style long beans studded with black olives and pork. Seamlessly blending the exotic and the familiar, the recipes say much about the ways in which the experience of travel is constantly measured against and colored by memories of home.

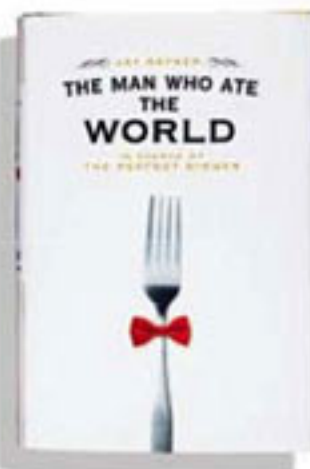
It is the end of a marriage, not an anniversary, that sends Bob Spitz, who earned praise for *The Beatles: The Biography* (Little, Brown and Company), his authoritative 2007 portrait of the legendary band, on a culinary quest. At the outset of **The Saucier's Apprentice: One Long Strange Trip Through the Great Cooking Schools of Europe** (Norton, \$24.95), Spitz describes himself as a "bedraggled and broke, ex-metropolitan, middle aged, divorced" writer who, despite a limited proficiency in the kitchen, decides that learning the secrets of fine cooking will help him understand the secrets of life. And so, with visions of duck confit dancing in his head, he shutters his Connecticut cottage and sets off on a pilgrimage to the culinary motherlands of France and Italy.



The book's subtitle is something of a misnomer: Spitz clocks more hours visiting village kitchens and attending amateur cooking classes than he does completing formal training programs. Nevertheless, his boundless enthusiasm for the subject helps to temper the self-indulgence of the story's premise.

While *The Saucier's Apprentice* isn't as ambitious a work as George Orwell's poignant *Down and Out in Paris and London*, the memoir par excellence of the outsider working in the restaurant kitchens of Europe, Spitz nevertheless labors admirably to find characters who will bring deeper meaning to his odyssey, such as the elderly Florentine shopkeeper who wordlessly welcomes him into her tiny kitchen for a tutorial on slow-simmered ragù, or the kerchief-wearing cook in Agen, France, who lives on a river barge and prepares Gascon specialties for friends and students "like it's her last day on earth". By the time Spitz stumbles home, four months later, he may not be a chef, but he is certainly ready to find his own way in the world, or at least in the world's kitchens.

After an accomplished career as a crime reporter and a nine-year stint as the food critic for London's *Observer* newspaper, Jay Rayner is as cynical about the restaurant world as Bob Spitz is starry-eyed, but he still can't escape its silk-gloved clutches. In his introduction to **The Man Who Ate the World: In Search of the Perfect Dinner** (Henry Holt, \$25), a rollicking account of a year of extravagant eating, Rayner explains, "A part of me—the large, greedy part—was constantly pursued by the fear that, for all the good food I was getting to experience, somewhere out there was a great meal, the ultimate meal, and that I was missing out on it." Determined to rid himself of that uncertainty once and for all, Rayner embarks on a high-roller's binge, jetting around the globe to sample the wares of its most exclusive dining rooms: the culinary temples of Paris, the celebrity-chef outposts of Las Vegas, the \$475-a-head secret sushi dens of Tokyo, the gilt palaces of Dubai (which, according to Rayner, "are



to good taste what Hitler was to world peace"), and so on. Given the old adage "The journey is the reward", it may not come as a surprise that, when the last course has been considered, he's no closer to delivering a verdict on the world's best meal than he was when he started out, but he has, for all his hedonism, gained a good measure of insight that extends beyond the dinner plate.

For readers whose gastro-fantasies are more well-worn rucksack than Louis Vuitton trunk, Margaret Hathaway and Karl Schatz have produced



**The Year of the Goat: 40,000 Miles and the Quest for the Perfect Cheese** (The Lyons Press, \$22.95). In 2003, Hathaway and Schatz said goodbye to their jobs as a bakery manager and a photo editor, respectively, in New York City; packed up their Hyundai, which they dubbed the goat-mobile; and set off across 43 states in pursuit of the knowledge they'd need to start a new life as dairy goat farmers. The book's breathless romanticism can feel a bit cloying at moments; rhapsodies on the intricacies of goat breeding are every bit as intense as those regarding the taste of raw-milk cheese. In

fact, the quest of the book's title turns out to be less a search for great goat cheese than it is a celebration of the goats and cheese makers themselves. Still, a few thousand miles' worth of earnestly documented visits to such goat-focused destinations as halal slaughterhouses, goat chariot races, goat barbecues, and even the experimental goat farms of Auburn, Alabama, "the epicenter of research on goat reproduction", can hardly fail to awaken in the reader a genuine appreciation for, if not the world's finest cheeses, the endearing creatures (human and animal) that make some of those cheeses possible.

Memoirs like *The Year of the Goat* exemplify the transformation that food writing has undergone in recent decades: from a discipline pursued largely by professional documentarians to a playground for thrill-seeking dabblers. For a glimpse of the way it used to be, take a ride with culinary historian Pat Willard. She retraced the steps of a corps of writers (including greats like Eudora Welty and Stetson Kennedy) who fanned out across America in the 1930s and '40s for the Works Progress Administration, the New Deal employment agency established by President Roosevelt during the Depression. Their mission: to document the nation's foodways by visiting state fairs, church socials, fish fries, and community festivals all over the land. (See "Taste of the Nation", January/February 2008.) The WPA project was shelved in 1943, and Willard picks up the thread in **America Eats! On the Road with the WPA** (Bloomsbury, \$25.99), resuscitating the WPA writers' original mission by combining reporting from her own travels with recipes and excerpts from archived WPA documents.

She laments the differences between the WPA era and our own—the homogenization of our cities and the decline of home cooking—but her prose nonetheless rings with the poetry of American optimism. To the doomsayers who warn that the Golden Arches will soon erase the last vestiges of regional American cuisine, she says, "I'm not a bubble-headed fool, I knew I'd encounter mountains of fried foodstuff and streams of rehydrated, reconstituted, and carbonized concentrated something or other. But I was also dead certain I'd find plenty of goodness, too." She did. 🐄



**W** A conversation with Cheryl and Bill Jamison at [SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112](http://SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112)



# LIST

## 11 Regional Road Snacks

Look for these homegrown treasures on your next cross-country odyssey

**W**E'VE GOT NOTHING AGAINST Doritos and Snickers bars, but when it comes to snacking on the road, you can almost always do better than standard gas station fare. A panoply of salty, crunchy, sweet delights—well-loved regional treats that

reflect the quirks and appetites of a particular state or region—awaits the road warrior hungry for local flavor. Here are 11 great finds, stretching from California to Maine, that we always seek out when we're journeying by car.

**1 | UNCLE HENRY'S PRETZELS** ([www.unclehenry.com](http://www.unclehenry.com)) With its German-Amish roots, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is pretzel country. We think the pretzels made by Uncle Henry's, a company in Bowmansville, rise above the rest. Each one is hand-twisted and baked in a stone oven according to a traditional recipe; the results are dark, toasty, and studded with coarse salt. —*Katherine Cancila*

**2 | DATELAND DATES** ([www.dateland.com](http://www.dateland.com)) Since the 1920s, travelers driving along Interstate 8, which traverses Arizona's Sonoran Desert, have stopped for gas and refreshment in the aptly named town of Dateland. Surrounded by 12 acres of date palm orchards, the entire town is owned by Roland and Charna Walker, who tend to the palms and the Dateland Restaurant, where you can indulge in coconut-flecked date rolls (pictured at top) and other baked goods made with the locally grown dates. You can also just buy a bag of the plump fruits and hit the highway. —*Karen Shimizu*

**3 | MIKE-SELL'S POTATO CHIPS** ([www.mike-sells.com](http://www.mike-sells.com)) This Dayton, Ohio-based company, which distributes its snacks across the Midwest, was founded in 1910 and makes some of the most flavorful chips we've ever tasted. Fried in pea-

nut oil, they have a delicate crispness and a rich, round flavor. A car floor littered with empty bags is the only potential drawback. —*K.C.*

**4 | RED SMITH PICKLED EGGS** ([www.redsmithfoods.com](http://www.redsmithfoods.com)) The pickled egg, once a ubiquitous bar snack, has retained its popularity in many parts of the country. Red Smith, a pickling company based just north of Miami, steeps shelled, hard-boiled eggs in a piquant blend of vinegar and crushed red pepper flakes, producing orange-tinted eggs that are spicy and agreeably sour, with luscious, creamy yolks. —*Kayu Lam*

**5 | ALE-8-ONE GINGER ALE** ([www.ale8one.com](http://www.ale8one.com)) A leisurely drive through Kentucky horse country becomes even more gratifying when there's a cold bottle of Ale-8-One in the cup holder. The ginger ale, which has been produced in the small Kentucky town of Winchester since 1926, is gently fizzy, with a soft, lemon-lime finish, and has sparked the interest of soda aficionados nationwide. —*K.L.*

**6 | GUIDA COFFEE MILK** ([www.supercow.com](http://www.supercow.com)) Little known outside of Rhode Island, coffee milk is the official state drink there. We favor Guida's, which is made with Autocrat coffee syrup (a preferred, local

brand) and can be found in most of the Ocean State's convenience stores. —*Leo Rodriguez*

**7 | MAINE MUNCHIES DRIED WILD BERRIES** ([www.mainemunchies.com](http://www.mainemunchies.com)) Made near Maine's Acadia National Park and sold throughout New England, Maine Munchies dried fruits, nuts, and trail mixes offer proof that road snacks can be both scrumptious and healthful. We especially like the dried wild Maine blueberries blended with dried goji berries, which have a slightly nutty flavor, in the company's "Maine to Everest" mix (pictured). —*K.S.*

**8 | CAROLINA COUNTRY SNACKS PORK RINDS** ([www.porkskins.com](http://www.porkskins.com)) A snack almost sacred in the South, pork rinds (deep-fried pork skins) deliver a smoky flavor and a satisfying crunch. We're partial to the puffy, porous ones made by Carolina Country Snacks, a family-owned company in Henderson, North Carolina. Don't miss the Sweet Mild Barbeque variety; they're spiked with paprika and decidedly less subtle than the name suggests. —*K.L.*

**9 | IT'S-IT ICE CREAM SANDWICHES** ([www.itsiticecream.com](http://www.itsiticecream.com)) These curiously named frozen treats have been a San Francisco favorite since

1928, when George Whitney, then the owner of Playland-at-the-Beach (a now defunct amusement park), dreamed up the idea of a scoop of vanilla ice cream squeezed between two oatmeal-raisin cookies; Whitney is said to have named his creation after a cow he knew of that went by the name It. The extra lure of this sandwich? The whole thing is dipped in chocolate. —*L.R.*

**10 | BLACK FOREST BISON JERKY** ([www.blackforestbison.com](http://www.blackforestbison.com)) For a tastier take on an old minimart favorite, try the jerky made with meat from the Black Forest Bison ranch, a 400-acre spread near Colorado Springs, Colorado. Smoked over hickory- and maple-fueled fire, the jerky is tender, pleasantly chewy, and flavored with worcestershire sauce and tamarind. —*L.R.*

**11 | BOURQUE'S BOUDIN** ([www.bourquespecialties.com](http://www.bourquespecialties.com)) If you're cruising along Interstate 10 outside Lafayette, Louisiana, you can't miss the billboards touting "the world's best boudin". It's a boast that Bourque's Super Store of nearby Port Barre makes good on: its pork boudin (pictured at bottom)—an emphatically flavored mix of pork, liver, rice, onions, black pepper, and cayenne pepper—and crawfish boudin (pictured above it) are some of the finest we've had. —*K.S.*



# ESSAY

## On the Road, Unplugged

The next time you hit the highway, try leaving the blogosphere behind

BY MATT GROSS

**A** GREAT HAMBURGER is, as any road-tripper knows, worth a very long detour. And the plate-size patties of pure, all-natural Longhorn beef served at the Meers Store & Restaurant, in southwestern Oklahoma, are said to be not merely great; they are, depending on whom you listen to, the best in the state, the Midwest, the entire country! (The place was even lauded in these very pages not long ago.)

I listen to the readers who faithfully post comments to the blog I write as part of my *Frugal Traveler* column for the *New York Times*, and so, one Tuesday morning last summer—about halfway through a meandering, 12,000-mile drive from Brooklyn to Seattle that I had undertaken for the newspaper—I woke up in Oklahoma City and followed my commenters' advice due south. I had one goal: must eat Meersburger.

For several hours, my 1989 Volvo station wagon wheezed along small highways and then through the grasslands of the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge, until, around one o'clock, I pulled in to the unincorporated town of Meers. I parked outside the ramshackle, century-old establishment, got out, and paused in giddy anticipation beneath a banner, hanging over the store entrance, that read, HAMBURGER HEAVEN.

Then I noticed another sign, just below and to the right of the first one: CLOSED TUESDAYS. I stood there, starving and shell-shocked, in the warm prairie breeze. How could the cyberfoodies have failed to mention this key detail? Had the Internet—heaven forbid!—led me astray?

To be fair to the servers, routers, databases, and Web masters that hold sway over so much of our daily lives, the Internet is an excellent resource for hungry road-trippers. Chowhound's contributors can tell you about every tasting menu and taco truck from Nashville to Nunavut, and

Roadfood.com, the exhaustive compendium of American eats compiled by the writers Jane and Michael Stern, offers plug-in software for your car's GPS system that will alert you to all the worthy barbecue joints, drive-ins, and clam shacks in your vehicle's general vicinity.

And yet, the Web and its accoutrements can also deprive you of perhaps the most essential feature of an American road journey: spontaneity. We go forth in our cars, SUVs, and RVs not simply to experience this vast nation as we've read about it on blogs but to discover it anew, to carve




our own fresh tracks along the country lanes and shining highways. Unplanned, hunger-induced pit stops and detours provide the defining, revelatory moments of any good road odyssey.

During that same trip last summer, on a state highway somewhere northwest of Indianapolis, I stopped for no reason at all in front of a boxy country café (its name now forgotten), strode in, and ordered a slice of homemade blackberry pie, which instantly flooded my brain with long-dormant childhood memories of backyard berry picking. In Saratoga, Iowa, I wandered into a dimly lit, half-empty roadhouse called the Spice Water Café and ate an over-the-top, three-cheese patty melt, served on marbled rye and

slathered with thousand island dressing, that satisfied my hunger more completely than anything I'd read about on Chowhound. And in Alliance, Nebraska, on my way to visit Carhenge (yes, a replica of Stonehenge made of cars), I pulled over at a drive-in called Patty's Zesto and consumed an order of battered, deep-fried green beans that has spoiled me forever for Japanese tempura.

The more I got lucky using just my wits, the more I pondered how to assess the potential merits of a café, saloon, or restaurant without the pre-emptory aid of the Internet. In his epic 1983 road trip chronicle *Blue Highways* (Little, Brown and Company), William Least Heat-Moon rates roadside eateries on the basis of how many calendars from local businesses (body shops, real estate agencies, hardware stores, and so on) the owners hang on their walls. "Three calendars: Can't miss on the farm-boy breakfasts," he writes. "Five calendars: Keep it under your hat, or they'll franchise." My system is less unified. A packed parking lot at lunchtime is a good sign, though not always requisite. Restaurants that occupy a shack or, even better, a truck are reliable bets. And far-flung, isolated, last-chance-gas towns are just about guaranteed to have an amazing café.

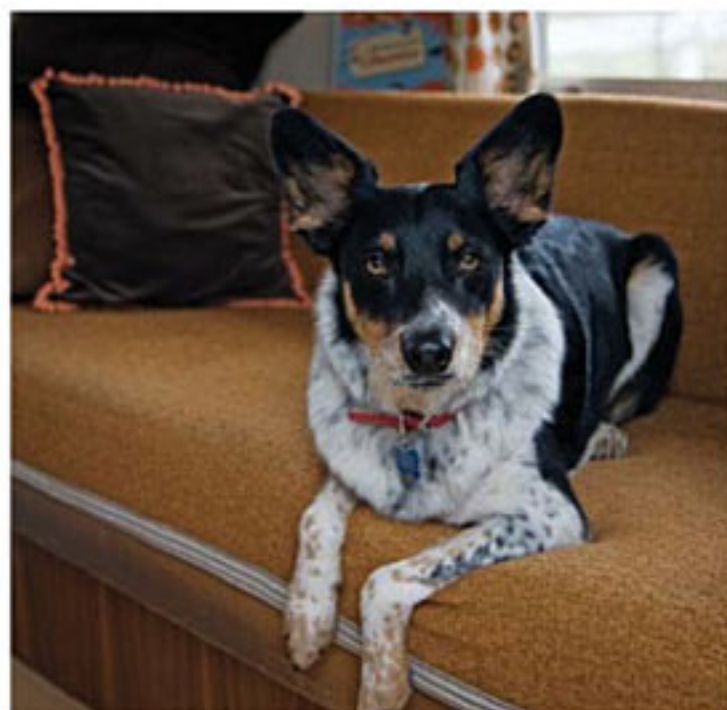
Then there's good old word of mouth. As I wilted in front of the Meers Store, an SUV pulled up next to me. Its driver, a clean-cut Oklahoman, told me that the closest restaurant was Ann's Country Kitchen, four miles east of Meers. Get the chicken fried steak, he said.

The lunch hour was nearly over when I arrived at Ann's, but the parking lot was still full. I took a booth, and soon I had before me a golden brown chicken fried steak, topped with a dainty dollop of white gravy. On the outside the steak was craggy and crisp; on the inside it was tender and juicy. After it had vanished down my gullet, I ordered blackberry cobbler. More berry-picking memories flowed forth, and suddenly I'd forgotten all about the Meersburger. I didn't need to eat again all day. Google that. 

MATT GROSS writes the *Frugal Traveler* column for the *New York Times*.



# KITCHENWISE



## Meals on Wheels

For devotees of the Airstream trailer, cooking is a big part of the fun

BY BRUCE LITTLEFIELD PHOTOGRAPHS BY LANDON NORDEMAN

**A**CCORDING TO LEGEND, the Airstream trailer—that gleaming, aluminum-sided soldier of the American road—was born because Wally Byam's wife refused to go camping without a kitchen. In 1929, Byam, a magazine publisher from Oregon who was determined to keep his wife happy while still enjoying the great outdoors, went into his backyard and constructed a hard-sided camping trailer equipped with an ice chest and a kerosene stove. The contraption was a hit at the campground, and within a few months Byam was

selling build-it-yourself instruction manuals for a dollar. In 1936 he introduced a sleek, amply equipped sleep-in trailer that bore a strong resemblance to the aerodynamic Pan Am Clipper, a popular airliner of the day. Dubbed the Airstream Clipper, the trailer had a shiny Duraluminum skin, a riveted body, and a galley kitchen. It created a sensation. By the 1950s, Byam was leading caravans of the silver creatures around the world. Since then, more than 125,000 Airstreams in various sizes and styles (built, since 1952, in Jackson Center, Ohio) have hit the

highways, and they are so well constructed and popular that an estimated 70 percent of all the trailers ever made are still on the road.

It was in the mid-1970s that I first saw my reflection in an Airstream. It came down the

**Clockwise from top left: cooking utensils in the author's Airstream kitchen; his 1966 Overlander; fresh fruit on the kitchen's flip-up dining table; the author preparing lunch, using the kitchen's built-in cutting boards, which cover the sink; baking apple dumplings; his dog, Westminster.**



## KITCHENWISE

street in front of my home in Lexington, South Carolina, and it was so striking that it stopped us kids in our tracks. The trailer belonged to our neighbors Mr. and Mrs. Simmons, and for the next couple of years they towed it past my house every Friday, as they departed to spend the weekend at a nearby lake, and every Sunday, when they came back home. In 1978, the summer after Mr. Simmons died, Mrs. Simmons walked behind her house and caught my friend David and me hiding in the trailer, which we had decided was an abandoned spacecraft. Instead of kicking us out, she suggested that David and I make it our clubhouse, and she appointed herself den mother. Mrs. Simmons was a veritable Julia Child in the Airstream's kitchen, cooking us "fancy" meals using its two burners and miniature refrigerator. She also taught us how to play poker, and the three of us would sit around

the flip-up Formica-topped table, playing cards and eating her chicken fried steak or Yukon Pete goulash (a mix of macaroni, bacon, ground beef, and tomato sauce).


It was another 28 years before I actually took an Airstream out on the road myself. In 2006 I made a deal on a 1966 Overlander, hooked it to the back of my Toyota SUV, and set out to travel the country to research and write books on American culture. For me, the fun of traveling with my Airstream is that I can cook with fresh local ingredients wherever I go, stopping at every fruit stand, farmers' market, and bakery between Fairbanks and Fort Lauderdale. Though I've decorated my Airstream with 1960s fabrics and vintage garage sale finds, I've never updated the kitchen. I am still using the original appliances, including a 36-inch-high Magic Chef refrigerator, which runs off either

propane or electricity, a Magic Chef oven with a blue-speckled enamel interior, and a three-burner stove equipped with a metal cover that converts the space from cooktop to counter-top. My sink is similarly furnished with covers that also flip over to double as cutting boards. With these appliances, as well as a few knives, some stackable bowls, and a well-organized

**W** *A roundup of camping and RV cookbooks at [SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE111](http://SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE111)*

spice cabinet, I can easily whip up a pot of my mother's spaghetti sauce, sauté some fresh vegetables, and bake a batch of chocolate chip cookies for dessert. But no matter what I'm cooking, I've found that the two most important things to have when I'm working in the small space are a strong knack for organization (everything should be stackable or hangable, and everything should have a place, including visitors) and a sense of humor.

For me and many other enthusiasts, being able to cook on the road is the best thing about owning one of the trailers, and camping-friendly recipes are a hot topic on Airforums.com, the shared website for the Airstream community. Indeed, at Airstream rallies—events at which anywhere between a couple of dozen and several hundred Airstreamers (as we call ourselves) converge on a campground for several days—cooking is often the main event. A few times a year, rallyers even compete in cook-offs, among them barbecue competitions at which participants can be found whipping up sauces and rubs in their tiny kitchens while pork shoulders cook in portable smokers set up outside.

Though I've never entered one of these competitions myself, I've learned a few things over the years about cooking on the road, and I'll share with you one piece of advice for making meals in an Airstream: a pot of soup is easy to fix on a small stove, but, with all due respect to Wally Byam's wife, if you're frying something messy, like the bacon required for Mrs. Simmons's Yukon Pete goulash, you'll want to cook outside, over a campfire. If you don't, you'll risk turning your silver-skinned beauty into a greasy spoon on wheels. 

**Would you like to share your own kitchen design ideas with other SAVEUR readers?** Send us photos of your kitchen, both overall and in detail, along with your name, address, and a few lines telling us what's special about it. Please note that unused submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned. Our address: Kitchenwise, SAVEUR, 15 East 32nd Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10016.

## A TRAILER FULL OF CHOICES

The Airstream line includes kitchens that run the gamut from the very modest, with one-burner stove tops, to the deluxe, with large refrigerators, pantries, and plenty of counter space. Airstream enthusiasts have discovered countless innovative ways to embrace the quirks of gastronomy on wheels. —B.L.



Bay Area architect Barbara Brown decided that, having designed numerous gourmet home kitchens in and around San Francisco, she and her husband, Dan Shugrue, a contractor, should travel with one just as nice. Custom modifications can be made to any Airstream model, so the couple chose to retrofit the kitchen of their 25-foot 1988 Excella with an ultramodern, stainless-steel chef's kitchen, including a custom-built sink, a Gaggenau two-burner stove, and a space-saving slide-out shelf system by Hafele. "It's George Jetson meets Eero Saarinen," Brown says.



Not everyone uses his or her Airstream's kitchen to make elaborate meals, preferring, instead, to keep things as simple as possible. "The kitchen in a 19-foot Bambi [one of the company's more petite models] is small, and there is very little counter space," says Terry Rich, a graphic designer from Tucson, Arizona, who, along with his partner, Greg Schmucker, often takes weeklong trips in Rich's 2006 model. "We prepare most of our meals in advance and freeze them in two-serving amounts." These frozen foods also help Rich cut down on the electricity he uses by keeping the refrigerator cold.



Some Airstream devotees, like Heidi Hough and her boyfriend, Art Detrich, have gone one step further and transformed their Airstream trailers into extensions of their permanent homes. Hough and Detrich originally planned to use their 1963 Tradewind as a temporary kitchen while they renovated their loft in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood; 19 years later, long after the renovation was completed, they are still happily cooking meals in the trailer. "It's really just a state of mind," Hough says. "You just size down what you're cooking—a smaller roast chicken, a smaller lasagne."



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# CLASSIC

## Miracle Cure

As simple as it is luxurious, gravlax brings out the best in salmon

BY DANA BOWEN

**I**N RECENT YEARS, I've tasted more riffs on gravlax—Scandinavian-style salt-and-sugar-cured salmon—than I can count. There was the gravlax made with honey, the gravlax scented with orange, lemon, and grapefruit zest, the gravlax spiced with cumin, and, at a Swedish friend's home, no less, the gravlax served with a sauce made from coffee. But it was the tequila-and-lime-spiked version, which tasted exactly like a margarita, that finally gave me pause.

Granted, most of those interpretations were pretty tasty; some were downright delicious. But there's an easy, understated beauty to the traditional recipe, which calls for nothing more than salt, sugar, fresh dill, and a salmon filet, that brings

into focus both the miraculous nature of the dish and the rich essence of the fish itself. The first time I made gravlax at home I was shocked by how simple the process was. I rubbed the raw salmon all over with the curing ingredients, wrapped it in plastic, and left it in the refrigerator, and after just a few days it had transformed into a satiny, meltingly tender delicacy. The gravlax, sliced into thin, translucent slivers, has such a concentrated flavor that it needs little embellishment and is best served simply, atop *knäckebröd* (a Swedish flatbread) with a garnish of chopped red onion and dill (below, left), or with a mustard-dill sauce known as *gravlaxsås*, the more traditional accompaniment (see page 95 for a recipe).

Gravlax is rooted in a traditional Scandinavian technique for preserving fish; the name comes from the Swedish words *gravad* (buried) and *lax* (salmon). The first versions of it were probably made in Sweden or Norway sometime in the 14th century, when fisherman found that burying fresh-caught fish in the cold ground, usually along with pine needles (possibly a precursor to the modern recipe's dill), caused fermentation and preserved the fish for as long as a year. This early method had its drawbacks. "Burying produces a very smelly fish," writes Mark Kurlansky in his 2002 book *Salt: A World History* (Walker & Company). "The Swedes have maintained the popularity of gravlax by replacing it with salmon cured with salt and sugar."

Once people discovered that the salting of raw fish could accomplish in days what burying it achieved over many months, minus the funk, the salt-cured versions of gravlax caught on, aided by the advent of the icebox and, later, the refrigerator. By the 19th century, gravlax as we know it had become a staple on *smörgåsbord* spreads. Scandinavian immigrants brought the recipe with them to the United States when they immigrated in the late 1800s, and in the 1920s many set up shop as fish processors in the Pacific Northwest to make gravlax commercially. The dish's popularity spread in the 1950s, driven by a widespread American interest in *smörgåsbord*, and the cured fish became a common feature in Jewish appetizer stores, alongside the many other varieties of cured and cold-smoked salmon (including lox, nova, and gaspé) that derive from other ethnic traditions. (To learn about some of these other varieties, see page 92.)

You can easily buy gravlax, but there's something so





## CLASSIC

## GRAVLAX



**1** In a small food processor, pulse 2 tbsp. white peppercorns, 1 tbsp. fennel seeds, and 1 tbsp. caraway seeds until coarsely ground; combine with  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup kosher salt and  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup sugar. Stretch plastic wrap over a plate; sprinkle with half the salt mixture. Place a 2-lb. center-cut, skin-on salmon filet on top, flesh side up. Cover with remaining salt mixture, 1 cup dill sprigs, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup aquavit (optional).



**2** Fold plastic wrap ends around salmon; wrap tightly with more plastic wrap. Refrigerate the fish on the plate for 48-72 hours, turning the package every 12 hours and using your fingers to redistribute the herb-and-spice-infused brine that accumulates as the salt pulls moisture from the salmon. The gravlax should be firm to the touch at the thickest part when fully cured.



**3** Unwrap salmon, discarding the spices, dill, and brine. Rinse the filet under cold running water and pat dry with paper towels. Finely chop  $\frac{1}{2}$  bunch dill; you should end up with about  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup. Cover a large plate with the chopped dill. Firmly press the flesh side of the gravlax into the dill to coat it evenly.



**4** Place gravlax skin side down on a board. With a long, narrow-bladed knife (use a granton slicer if you have one; the divots along the blade make for smoother, more uniform slices), slice gravlax against grain, on the diagonal, into thin pieces. Serve with mustard-dill sauce (see page 95) or on knäckebröd with minced onion. Refrigerate any remaining gravlax, wrapped in plastic wrap, for up to 2 weeks. Serves 8-10.

gratifying about making your own. Before you get started, it helps to understand the basic chemistry behind the cure. The salt draws moisture and water-soluble proteins out of the cells of the fish, allowing the flavors of the other ingredients to penetrate the flesh more readily; the salt also restores proteins in the flesh, causing it to firm up. And, most crucial, salt preserves the fish and prevents spoilage. You have to hand it to those early Scandinavian innovators who understood the principles of preservation long before science explained it. "Today we know and can measure the exact values of these [chemical] relationships," wrote the Norwegian historian Astri Riddervold in a paper about "gravlaks" (as the dish is called in Norway) for the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cooking in 1985. "The practical experiences, however, are hundreds, even thousands of years old, carefully handed down from one generation to the next."

Of course, variations in traditional gravlax recipes have developed over time. Some, for example, call for placing a heavy object on top of the fish while it cures. I've made versions that were weighted and versions that were not, and I've found that the weighted fish seemed to cure faster and ended up with a slightly firmer texture and a more evenly distributed flavor. Barbara Rasco, a professor of food science at Washington State University who has worked with the seafood industry for 30 years, explained to me that the weight compresses the fish's cells and facilitates salt penetration and water extraction.

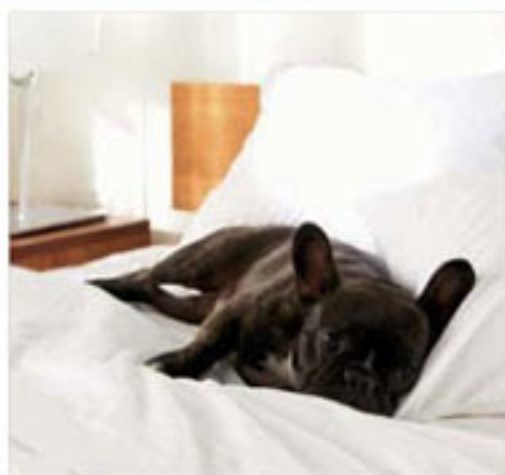
Other recipes suggest the addition of alcohol, usually aquavit, the clear Swedish spirit distilled from grains or potatoes. After making gravlax both with aquavit and without, I found that the alcohol seemed to concentrate the flavor of the fish, the dill, and the other seasonings. "That's because the flavor components in the dish are alcohol soluble," Rasco explained, meaning that alcohol unlocks the flavor compounds in the herbs and spices and helps them permeate the fish's flesh. Alcohol also releases the ample flavor stored in the salmon's fat cells, Rasco told me; sure enough, I found that gravlax made with fattier varieties—like farm-raised Atlantic salmon—had a more intense overall flavor than did leaner varieties such as coho, a wild Pacific salmon, which had not only a milder taste after curing but also a less silky texture.

Even with traditional Scandinavian recipes, there's no end to the variations. Some I have come across call for rubbing the flesh with caraway and juniper or white peppercorns and coriander seeds; others advise adding fennel fronds or other herbs to complement the dill. The more I researched and the more versions I tried, the more I became convinced that the urge to experiment with gravlax is as natural as the evolution of gravlax itself. Recently, I've allowed myself to freestyle a bit: not long ago, I tried a preparation that included orange zest; another time, I added Pernod. With each new iteration, I marveled at how the different cures took the dish in wildly divergent directions. Still, such liberalism should have its limits. Take it from me: stop yourself before you get to the tequila. 🍷





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SAVEUR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
JAMES OSELAND KICKS  
BACK IN PENNSYLVANIA  
(SEE "ADVENTURES IN  
GOOD EATING", PAGE 42).



# WE HIT THE ROAD HUNGRY



And we do so every chance we get, in the warm months or the chilly ones, on long summer breaks or one-day getaways. We are, after all, children of the road. We were raised on Stuckey's roadside restaurants and gas stations made to look like teepees. We carry with us the memories of root beer drive-ins and tailgate picnics. We came of age inside the family Chevy, Dad behind the wheel, Mom in the passenger seat, an AAA map spread between them. We may be older now, and our tastes have grown up with us, but we still feel the most alive when we pack up the car and strike out into the unknown, following the country's ribbonlike highways to long-dreamed-of destinations or to nowhere in particular. And we're still lured by the American landscape's welcoming embrace: its soaring mountains, yawning canyons, and endless plains. Wherever we go, our appetite is fierce. It's easy to find sustenance—the greasy, salty minimart snacks and fast-food fixes—but we seek more than that. We pull over for bánh mì sandwiches in a Sacramento strip mall, old-fashioned pecan brittle in Memphis, single-vineyard pinot noir in Oregon, deep-fried hot dogs in a New Jersey saloon, and the world's best fried chicken in Indianapolis. Join us in the following pages as we take to the highway, keeping our eyes peeled for both the sweet and the savory glories of the past and the taste of the new. —*The Editors*



ADVENTURES IN GOOD EATING Page 42; CALIFORNIA ASIAN Page 44; TEXAS'S MARGARITA MILES Page 52; PINOT NOIR PILGRIMAGE Page 55; THE DOGS OF SUMMER Page 58; SOUTHBOUND SUGAR SORTIE Page 59

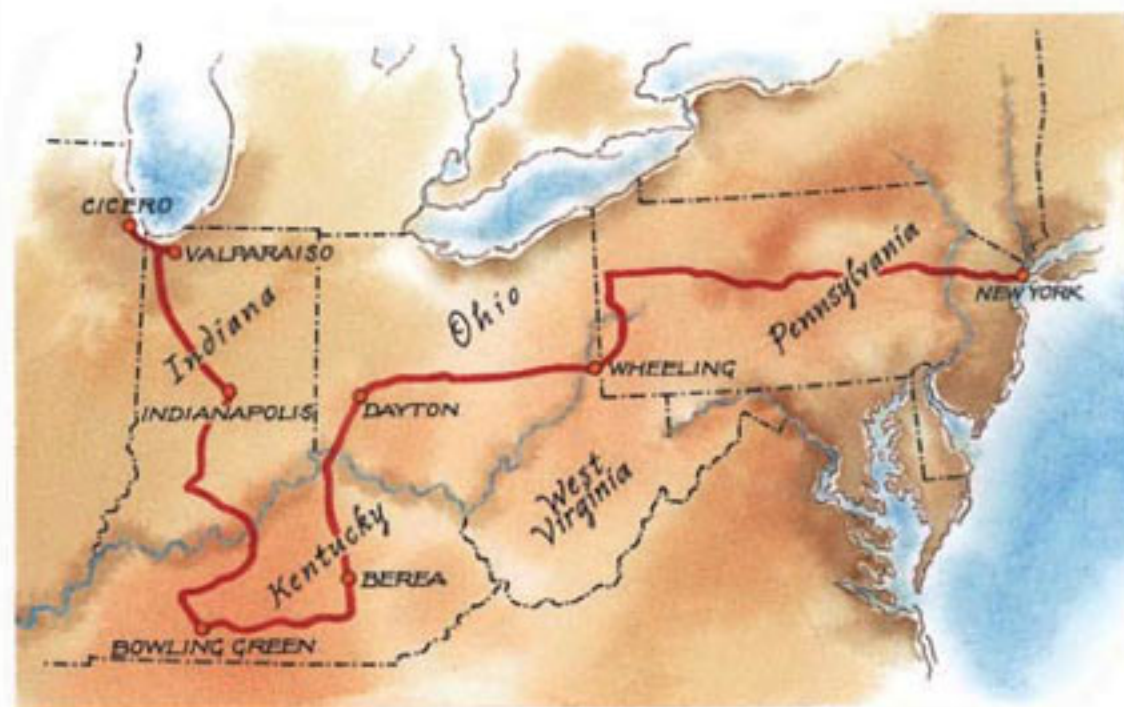




# Adventures in Good Eating

BY TODD COLEMAN AND JAMES OSELAND PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES OSELAND

BY LATE JUNE, WE—that is, Todd Coleman, SAVEUR's food editor, and James Oseland, the editor-in-chief—had been planning our trip for months and were finally ready to hit the road. The plan? To drive from Chicago to New York in a wide-ranging arc, stopping at restaurants, diners, taverns, and inns that had been featured in a famous series of culinary guidebooks from the 1930s, '40s, '50s, and '60s and had managed to stay in operation ever since. The books—remarkable compendiums of American eats published annually from 1936 until 1962—belonged to the once famous but now largely forgotten *Adventures in Good Eating* series published by the pioneering travel guide writer and cake mix mogul Duncan Hines. We knew that Hines (see “The Man and the Mix”, page 57) and the editors of the guidebook series he founded had helped revolutionize the way Americans ate on the road before the age of the interstate, and we were seized with the urge to follow in Hines's tire treads. What better way to connect with a fast-fading America, with that part of our culinary landscape that has resisted mass-scale homogenization? And what a great excuse to eat a lot of honest,



good food. The idea (all due credit to Todd, who came up with it) appealed both to our sense of nostalgia and to our wanderlust; it also proved difficult to execute: even after narrowing the field by selecting just a single volume from each of the four decades the series was published, we had a list of hundreds of tantalizing possibilities, from the Beaumont Inn, an elegant-sounding country-ham-and-biscuits restaurant

in Harrodsburg, Kentucky (from the 1938 edition), to a Lebanon, Ohio, stalwart called the Golden Lamb, which, the 1957 edition noted, once fed such illustrious guests as John Quincy Adams and Charles Dickens. But, as we set about researching these establishments, we were disappointed to find that nearly all had long since closed. And the majority of those that were still in business seemed to have retained little of their

original character aside from the business's name. Felicitously, that left us with a pretty manageable selection of restaurants: about a half dozen of them, lying along a route that zigzagged across Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia, and New York. Here is the true and unvarnished account of our journey.

**Sunday (Day 1)** We fly into Chicago's O'Hare airport in the afternoon and rent a car. The airport rental agency offers a veritable playground of choices. Standing before the massive, gleaming fleet, we pick a gray minivan, which, we concluded after much deliberation, was the modern-day descendant of the wood-paneled station wagon.

Our first stop is the 86-year-old Klas Restaurant in Cicero, the town, just outside Chicago, that was Al Capone's gangland fiefdom during Prohibition. The 1962 edition of *Adventures in*

*Good Eating* describes Klas as having “colorful European architecture and interior design”. When you're driving down Cermak Road, you can't miss it; it's a real-life gingerbread house. An ornate sign posted on the exterior reads HOUSE OF HAPPINESS. We go inside and are met by Bob Biddle, one of the owners. He is earnest and friendly, with a big Midwestern smile. (He's from Reno, Nevada, we later learn.) Cicero was once home to a thriving Czech community, he tells us. Looking around, we notice that the dining room is all but vacant. “We're trying to get the Czech immigrants to come back,” says Biddle. “We do a lot of funeral banquets.”

Biddle leads us to our table. The menu includes a mix of Bohemian and American specialties, such as beef goulash and barbecued chicken. The kids' section reads,

## METHOD

### Hollyhock Hill's Fried Chicken

When preparing a chicken for frying, cook Tom Sheron of the Hollyhock Hill restaurant in Indianapolis halves the breast crosswise instead of lengthwise, leaving the wishbone intact. “It's the way fried chicken used to be cut,” he says. Cut a 3-4-lb. chicken into 8 pieces and season generously with kosher salt; transfer to a bowl and refrigerate, covered, for at least 1 hour or overnight. Over high heat, melt enough lard or vegetable shortening in a deep 12” cast-iron skillet that it reaches a depth of  $\frac{3}{4}$ ”; heat until a deep-fry thermometer inserted in fat reads 350°. Place 2 cups flour on a plate. Dredge chicken in flour and fry, turning occasionally, until light brown, about 10 minutes. Reduce heat to medium; fry, turning occasionally, until golden brown and cooked through, about 10 minutes more. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate. Serves 2-4.









JENNIFER DOAN, DAUGHTER OF OWNER VINH "VINNY" DOAN, TUCKS INTO A BOWL OF PHO, THE VIETNAMESE BEEF NOODLE SOUP, AT NEW PARIS BAKERY AND CAFÉ IN SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA.



## California Asian

Nearly 5 million people of Asian descent reside in California, and recent census figures show that the state's most concentrated Asian communities—Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai, and more—are no longer situated in the heart of the big cities but outside them. So, when my husband and I decided to hit the highway recently on a food-focused tour of the state, we bypassed LA and San Francisco and headed for the unprepossessing strip malls and palm-lined main streets of suburbia.

Our first stop was the municipality of Westminster, home to Little Saigon, the thriving business district that serves Orange County's 200,000 Vietnamese-American residents, who constitute the largest Vietnamese community outside Vietnam. At the **Asian Garden Mall** (9200 Bolsa Avenue, Westminster; 714/894-3854), the vendors in

the lively food court hawked noodle soups, papaya salads, and a riot of Vietnamese snack foods, including garlicky skewered meatballs and fried bananas. We ordered freshly pressed sugarcane juice before venturing out to peruse the well-stocked markets along Bolsa Avenue, where we found fresh rice noodles, frozen durian, and taro stem along with non-Asian foodstuffs like peanut butter and tortillas, in a wonderful hodgepodge that, for me, defines Southern California.

An hour north, in the San Gabriel Valley, just east of Los Angeles, we cruised through the communities of Monterey Park, Alhambra, San Gabriel, and Rosemead, home to the densest concentration of Chinese-Americans in Southern California. At **San Gabriel Square** (140 West Valley Boulevard, San Gabriel; 626/280-0786), a 12-acre complex

also known as the Great Mall of China, we were overwhelmed by the array of regional Chinese restaurants: Sichuanese, Taiwanese, Hong Kong style, and on and on. Ultimately, we opted for the Shanghaiese fare at nearby **Mei Long Village** (301 West Valley Boulevard, San Gabriel; 626/284-4769), where the xiao long bao (broth-and-pork-filled dumplings) were among the most delicate and aromatic I've ever had.

Early the next morning, we drove north toward Sacramento, where 19 percent of the population claims an Asian background. On the outskirts of town, along a two-mile stretch of Stockton Boulevard lined with Asian businesses, we found **Vinh Phat Market** (6105 Stockton Boulevard, Sacramento; 916/424-8613). I eagerly pawed Thai eggplants, tender long beans, and other Asian produce—much of it grown by Southeast Asian farmers nearby—and marveled at the buzzing butcher counter, where a dozen workers were slicing specialty cuts for clamoring customers: ribbons of beef for hot pots, spareribs for braising, and chunks of pork hock for soups. Down the road, at a restaurant called **Pho Bac Hoa Viet** (6645 Stockton Boulevard, #300, Sacramento; 916/399-1688), we tasted savory pho, the classic Vietnamese noodle soup, and bought terrific-looking grilled-pork bánh mì sandwiches at **New Paris Bakery and Café** (6901 Stockton Boulevard, #300, Sacramento; 916/391-1118). Later, as we headed west on Interstate 80 and munched on our bánh mì, we found the notion of living in the 'burbs to be suddenly pretty enticing. —Andrea Nguyen, a *SAVEUR* contributing editor and the author of *Into the Vietnamese Kitchen* (Ten Speed Press, 2006)





## ROAD TRIP

"For the Beginners of Fine Dining." We order the liver dumpling soup and a host of other dishes. The soup is as beautiful as it is delicious: a tangle of thin noodles in a deeply flavored broth, with liver dumplings as big as a kid's fist. Later, Biddle takes us on a tour. The place has a decidedly eerie feel. Antler chandeliers cast a yellowish glow over dusty bric-a-brac and painted wooden European folk art. Biddle hands us some old slot machine coins that he found hid-

den behind a wall in a pouch. This place has its secrets. "The upstairs is haunted," he says.

**Monday (Day 2)** In the early morning, we leave Chicago and head east, to Indiana. We exit Interstate 80 onto southbound U.S. Highway 421. Farmland rolls away from us on both sides of the road. We come to a crossroads and take a right onto U.S. Highway 30, entering the city of Valparaiso and landing smack-

dab in a jungle of box stores and chain restaurants. We're looking for a place called Strongbow Inn. According to the address we have, it's supposed to be right here. We see a Burger King. There's a Bob Evans. Across the street is a Wal-Mart. Finally, we spot the place—right in front of us, dwarfed by the towering signage of its neighbors.

At the front of the restaurant we are confronted with a large cement turkey. "Chicken is a bad

word around here," says the manager, Barb Raschke, when we walk inside. She's worked here for 33 years; when she started, the restaurant was called the Strongbow Turkey Inn. Prior to that it was a turkey farm. "We raised our last batch of turkeys in 1981," says Raschke. As we look over the menu, turkey does seem to be the name of the game. We order pretty much everything turkey-related on offer. The turkey noodle soup has thick,



**LEFT:** A LAWN SCULPTURE AT A FARM IN INDIANA, EN ROUTE TO THE TOWN OF LAFAYETTE. **CENTER:** THE HOUSE-MADE PECAN PIES AT STRONGBOW INN, A FORMER TURKEY FARM IN VALPARAISO, INDIANA. **RIGHT:** U.S. HIGHWAY 421, IN NORTHERN INDIANA FARM COUNTRY.



**LEFT:** THE MOTEL, IN THE WEST VIRGINIA TOWN OF MOUNDSVILLE, WHERE THE AUTHORS SPENT THEIR LAST NIGHT ON THE ROAD. **RIGHT:** A PAINTING AT THE HOLLYHOCK HILL RESTAURANT IN INDIANAPOLIS.



**LEFT:** ORANGE NEHI SODA AT THE SMOKEY PIG BAR-B-Q, A RESTAURANT IN BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY. **CENTER:** THE HOUSE-MADE SLICED BREAD IN THE KITCHEN OF STRONGBOW INN. **RIGHT:** BRUCE ALCORN, A COOK FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS AT BOONE TAVERN IN BERE, KENTUCKY.



## ROAD TRIP



1



2



3



4



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6



7



8

## SIDES SHOW

SOME SAY THAT SIDE DISHES MAKE THE MEAL; ON OUR JOURNEY, WE FOUND A FEW OLD-SCHOOL DELIGHTS THAT ABLY SUPPORT THE THEORY. **1** THE MOLDED FRUIT SALAD AT STRONGBOW INN IN VALPARAISO, INDIANA. **2** AN ASSORTMENT OF SIDES AT HOLLYHOCK HILL, IN INDIANAPOLIS: COTTAGE CHEESE, PICKLED BEETS, ICEBERG LETTUCE SALAD, AND APPLE BUTTER. **3** THE SWEET-AND-SOUR STEWED TOMATOES, TOPPED WITH FRIED CROUTONS, AT THE PINE CLUB IN DAYTON, OHIO. **4** A COOLING, PEPPER-FLECKED GLASS OF TOMATO JUICE AT HOLLYHOCK HILL. **5** THE RED ROQUEFORT SALAD (LETTUCE TOPPED WITH ROQUEFORT AND JULIENNED CARROTS) AT THE PINE CLUB, WHICH ALSO OFFERED **6** CREAMED SPINACH AND **7** SARDINES ON RYE BREAD. **8** THE FRIED GREEN TOMATOES, GREEN BEANS, AND MASHED POTATOES AT BOONE TAVERN IN BERA, KENTUCKY.



## ROAD TRIP

## RECIPE

**Strongbow Inn's Turkey Noodle Soup**

SERVES 6-8

Tender, hand-cut noodles are a hallmark of this delicious from-scratch soup (right).

- 3 lbs. turkey wings (about 5; see page 97)
- 5 ribs celery (2 roughly chopped, 3 finely chopped)
- 2 medium yellow onions (1 roughly chopped, 1 finely chopped)
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 large carrot, roughly chopped
- 1 1/4 cups flour
- Kosher salt to taste
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter

**1.** In a large pot, combine wings, roughly chopped celery, roughly chopped onions, thyme, bay leaves, and carrots with 15 cups water. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer, skimming fat, 3 1/2 hours. Strain broth; set aside. Remove wings; pull off and shred meat; set aside. Discard skin and bones and remaining solids.

**2.** In a large bowl, stir together flour, 1 tsp. salt, eggs, and 3 tbsp. water to make a sticky dough. Transfer to a floured sheet of plastic wrap and wrap loosely; chill for 1 hour. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Halve dough. On a floured cutting board, roll half the dough into a 1/8"-thick rectangle. Trim and discard edges. Cut dough into 1/8"-wide noodles. Repeat with remaining dough. Gently push noodles off the board into the water; boil until puffed and tender, 8-10 minutes. Drain.

**3.** Heat butter in a 4-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. Add remaining celery and onions; cook until soft, 8-10 minutes. Add broth; season with salt; boil. Stir in wing meat and noodles. Sprinkle with chopped parsley, if you like.



light-as-air house-made noodles. The turkey pie arrives under a fancy metal cloche, beneath which lies a crisp round of pastry splashed with gravy and adorned with a single, diamond-shaped piece of diced red pepper. There are also fried turkey livers smothered with caramelized onions and framed with a triangular formation of crisp bacon. "Enjoy!" says Angela, our waitress.

Later that afternoon, we get back on U.S. Highway 30 and head east and then south, past windswept corn and soybean fields, grain silos, and the detritus of old farms. We stay the night in Lafayette, Indiana.

**Tuesday (Day 3)** The chatter of more than 60 white-haired women fills the room, drowning out the Muzak playing softly in

the background. Waitresses in baby blue smocks rush by cradling armloads of fried chicken. The lady to Todd's right introduces herself as Anna Schneider. "We're the Lilly Lunch Bunch," she says, explaining that she and her friends are retirees from the Eli Lilly pharmaceuticals company, based nearby. "We've been having lunch here together for years."

We're on the north side of Indianapolis, at Hollyhock Hill, a family-style chicken dinner restaurant that has been around for 80 years. The dining room is under the direction of Jay Snyder, a kindly, middle-aged gentleman. "The original dining room used to be a summer cottage," says Snyder. "I started here, cleaning up the yard, when I was 16." The kitchen's windows have *(continued on page 51)*





THE "LILLY LUNCH BUNCH"—RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF THE ELI LILLY PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY, BASED NEARBY—HAVING A DESSERT OF VANILLA ICE CREAM AT THE HOLLYHOCK HILL RESTAURANT IN INDIANAPOLIS.











## ROAD TRIP

## RECIPE

## Boone Tavern's Yeasty Rolls

MAKES 12 ROLLS

This recipe was developed by Richard T. Houghton, who managed Boone Tavern in Berea, Kentucky, from 1940 to 1976.

- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp. fine salt
- 1 cup whole milk
- 5 tbsp. unsalted butter, diced
- 4 tbsp. sugar
- 1 1/4-oz. package active dry yeast
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil

**1.** In the bowl of a standing mixer, sift flour and salt; set aside. In a 2-quart saucepan, heat milk to 180°. Add 4 tbsp. of the butter and 1 tbsp. of the sugar; stir. Let milk mixture cool to 115°. Stir in yeast and let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. Add remaining sugar; stir to dissolve. Add yeast mixture to flour mixture; stir to combine. Stir in eggs and knead with the mixer, using the dough hook, on medium speed until dough forms into a ball and pulls away from the sides of the bowl, 6–8 minutes. Grease a large bowl with the oil; nestle dough inside. Cover bowl with a towel; let rise in a warm spot until dough has doubled in size, about 2 hours.

**2.** Grease a nonstick muffin pan with remaining butter. Divide dough into 12 equal-size pieces. On a cutting board, cup your hand over 1 dough piece; gently roll it against board to form a smooth ball. Repeat with remaining pieces. Divide dough balls between muffin cups. Cover with a towel; let rise in a warm spot for 30 minutes. Uncover; let rise until 2" above the pan, about 1 1/2 hours more.

**3.** Heat oven to 400°. Bake the rolls until puffed and light brown, 8–10 minutes. Let cool slightly in the muffin pan before serving.



**TOP:** A YEASTY ROLL FROM BOONE TAVERN. **ABOVE LEFT:** OUTSIDE THE DUNCAN HINES HOME IN BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY. **ABOVE RIGHT:** BARB RASCHKE (LEFT) AND ANITA SPELLAR AT STRONGBOW INN.

(continued from page 47) flowery curtains, and the countertops are pink Formica. Tom Sheron, a goateed man in his 30s, has been frying the chicken here for 15 years. James declares it some of the best he's had; he asks what the secret is. "Lard," says Sheron. "That's the only way to fry chicken." The dinner comes with a relish tray, mashed potatoes with cream gravy, biscuits, cottage

cheese, pickled beets, apple butter, green beans, and corn. "When this place started it was on a dirt road; it was way out in the country," says Snyder.

After lunch, Todd announces that he needs a haircut. Jay Snyder directs us to a friend of his who has a barbershop down the road. Todd asks the barber whether she's heard of the Nashville House in Nashville, Indiana, our next, and

much anticipated, stop. The owners had mailed us their menu before we left, and, to our great pleasure, it was handwritten. We've been looking forward to its Hoo-sier ham and sassafras tea. "It's so nice there," the barber tells Todd. "You're going to love it."

The restaurant proves easy to spot: it's a faux log cabin sitting at a busy intersection; it's flanked by a Carmel Corn Cot-

tage and a Colonial Craft Shop, and it looks about as authentic as a Cracker Barrel. Looks can be deceiving, but we decide not to go in. That night we stay at an Econo Lodge next to another Wal-Mart.

**Wednesday (Day 4)** Todd is wearing thin white cotton gloves and carrying a tray of old, empty Duncan (continued on page 54)





# Texas's Margarita Miles

In 1971, Mariano Martinez, the owner of a Dallas Tex-Mex restaurant, figured out how to make frozen margaritas in a soft-serve ice cream machine. To get the proper consistency, he had to add a lot of sugar, and the result was a slushy, easy-drinking wonder. The shaken margarita and the blended margarita had been around for decades, but nobody much cared; it was the machine-made version that gave the whole world a brain freeze. The enormous popularity of the drink transformed the liquor industry: between 1975 and 1995, U.S. sales of tequila increased by more than 1,500 percent. Today, whether you take yours shaken, blended, or frozen, my home state of Texas is the country's margarita mecca, home to some of the world's finest riffs on this elemental libation of tequila, fruit liqueur, and fruit juice.

Martinez's first machine now resides in the Smithsonian, and his old place closed in 2002. Fortunately, his new one, **Mariano's Hacienda** (6300 Skillman Street, Building J, Dallas; 214/691-3888), serves a frozen margarita made from the original recipe, which means it's an appropriate place to start a Texas margarita tour. The drink also occupies center stage at the upscale **Trece Mexican Kitchen and Tequila Lounge** (4513 Travis Street, Dallas; 214/780-1900), where Dallas's margarita of the moment is the Stodg-rita, named for a regular named Steven Stodghill. It's shaken, with Herradura Selección Suprema tequila, fresh lime juice, organic agave nectar, and a dash of Red Bull. And it costs \$45.

Too rich for your blood? Head south to the Austin Tex-Mex institution **Matt's El Rancho** (2613 South Lamar Boulevard, Austin; 512/462-9333). In 1987, the restaurant moved from a humble converted residence to a grand new building centered around a

spectacular bar. These days, the menu recommends a frozen margarita with red wine sangria swirled into it. An equally fanciful interpretation of the drink can be found nearby, at **Fonda San Miguel** (2330 West North Loop Boulevard, Austin; 512/459-4121); that establishment's Silver Coin Margarita features watermelon-infused tequila with Cointreau and fresh lime



juice and is garnished with a watermelon slice.

At many of these places, tantalizing bar snacks have replaced the old combination plates. At **Las Canarias** (112 College Street, San Antonio; 210/518-1063), in San Antonio's Omni La Mansión del Rio hotel, where bartender Ruben Bernal makes legendary prickly pear and pomegranate margaritas,

buffalo carpaccio and swordfish tempura are typical accompaniments.

Those more in the mood for fajitas and mariachis go for the frozen with salt at **La Margarita Mexican Restaurant and Oyster Bar** (120 Produce Row, San Antonio; 210/227-7140). This boisterous Tex-Mex mecca is owned by the Cortez family, which has run the 24-hour bakery, bar, and restaurant next door since 1941. Sure, La Margarita is a little touristy, but what margarita expedition would be complete without a photo of you in a sombrero, proudly holding up an enormous frozen beverage?

Last stop: Houston, home to the state's most powerful margaritas. Making a reservation is the only way to get a table at **Armandos** (2630 Westheimer, Houston; 713/520-1738), the toniest Tex-Mex spot in the city. The Armandos Margarita, which comes in a fish bowl-size glass, is notoriously potent. "After three at Armandos," one experienced imbibor observed, "you wake up naked in somebody's swimming pool."

One of the oldest margarita bars in Texas, at the restaurant El Patio, opened in the mid-1960s. Back then, it was illegal for Texas restaurants to serve hard liquor, so El Patio ran a speakeasy called Club Villa Sana. The part of the sign reading "Villa Sana" was stolen; then, in the early '70s, when liquor by the drink was legalized, an obligatory notice was tacked under the word "Club". Hence **Club No Minors** (6444 Westheimer, Houston; 713/780-0410). Get the Sissy Margarita if you have more traveling to do; if you order the Blue Margarita, you may not find your way back to your hotel. —Robb Walsh, food critic at the Houston Press and the author of *The Tex-Mex Cookbook* (Broadway Books, 2004)

**MIX AND CHILL** Here's how to make five of the margaritas mentioned above, plus a classic shaken margarita. We recommend using Herradura Silver Tequila (see page 97). **1** For a margarita served on the rocks or up, combine 4 oz. silver tequila, 1½ oz. fresh lime juice, 1 oz. Cointreau, ½ cup crushed ice, and ½ oz. simple syrup in a cocktail shaker. Cover; shake for 10 seconds; strain and pour into 2 small ice-filled tumblers or chilled cocktail glasses. **2** Matt's El Rancho in Austin combines two festive drinks in its sangria margarita. Stir together 4 oz. red wine, 2 oz. orange juice, 2 oz. fresh lime juice, and 2 oz. simple syrup. Add 1½ oz. of this sangria mixture to a margarita glass; swirl in some frozen margarita. **3** Watermelon gives the Silver Coin Margarita, from Austin's Fonda San Miguel, its refreshing kick. Cut a medium-size seedless watermelon into 1" cubes (rind removed) until you have roughly 2 lbs. of fruit. Transfer to a glass jar, pour in one 750-ml bottle of silver tequila, seal jar, and let steep for 2 days. To make 2 drinks, combine 4 oz. of the watermelon-infused tequila, 2 cups crushed ice, 2 oz. frozen limeade, 2 cubes of the infused watermelon, and 1½ oz. Cointreau in a blender. Purée until slushy. Garnish with watermelon wedges. **4** The Blue Margarita at Club No Minors in Houston gets its dazzling color from blue curaçao liqueur. Pour 1 oz. blue curaçao into a margarita glass; swirl in a little frozen margarita. **5** To make Ruben Bernal's prickly pear margaritas, peel 10 prickly pear fruits (see page 97); put into a glass jar. Pour in one 750-ml bottle of silver tequila, seal jar, and let steep for at least 2 days. To make 2 drinks, mash 1 prickly pear through a mesh strainer into a bowl; discard seeds. Combine 4 oz. prickly pear-infused tequila, 2 cups crushed ice, 2 oz. frozen limeade, 1½ oz. Cointreau, and the mashed prickly pear in blender; purée until slushy. **6** For a version of Mariano Martinez's frozen margarita, combine 4 oz. silver tequila, 2 cups crushed ice, 2 oz. frozen limeade, 1½ oz. Cointreau, and 1 oz. fresh lime juice in a blender. Purée until slushy. Serves 2.







## ROAD TRIP

(continued from page 51) Hines cake mix boxes. We're at the library and museum of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green. Duncan Hines was born and raised in this town, and we felt compelled to pay a visit. The university is in the midst of installing a permanent exhibit dedicated to Hines's life and times called "Recommended by Duncan Hines", which will feature a life-size mannequin of the man and his actual home test kitchen. We're sifting through the

boxes of ephemera—matchbooks, postcards, ice cream containers, advertisements—that are to be displayed. With us is Cora Jane Spiller, Duncan Hines's great-niece, who is now 80 years old.

Spiller takes us out to dinner along with a few other Duncan Hines experts and enthusiasts. She tells us she is wearing a dress that once belonged to Clara Hines, Duncan's wife. "If they can't be here to drink and toast with us," Spiller says, referring to Duncan and Clara,

"they can be here in clothing." As Bowling Green no longer harbors a restaurant that was officially recommended by "Uncle Duncan", we dine instead at the Smokey Pig Bar-B-Q, where we sample sweet and smoky thin-cut pork shoulder and wash it down with Nehi orange soda. Later, Spiller takes us to Duncan Hines's former home, now a funeral parlor.

**Thursday (Day 5)** We're rolling across central Kentucky

now. We drive down U.S. Highway 127 to State Highway 78 and then over to State Highway 52, on our way to the town of Berea, home to Boone Tavern. Situated on the campus of Berea College (a tuition-free Christian school), the 99-year-old tavern and hotel earned some degree of national fame under the management of Richard T. Hougen, who managed the establishment from 1940 to 1976. During his tenure, he perfected such

## RECIPE

## Kentucky Chess Pie

SERVES 8

A variation of this classic Southern custard pie (shown on page 50), also known as Jefferson Davis pie, is served at Boone Tavern in Berea, Kentucky.

- 3/4 cup plus 1 tbsp. flour
- 1/2 tbsp. plus 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. fine salt
- 12 tbsp. unsalted butter, diced
- 2/3 cup packed light brown sugar
- 2/3 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 4 egg yolks plus 1 egg

**1.** Put the flour, 1/2 tbsp. sugar, and 1/2 tsp. salt into a food processor and pulse to combine. Add 6 tbsp. of the butter and pulse until pea-size pieces have formed. Drizzle in 2-3 tbsp. ice water; pulse until dough just comes together. Turn dough out onto a floured surface; form into a ball. Flatten into a disk and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Chill for at least 1 hour.

**2.** On a floured surface, roll dough into a 12" circle about 1/8" thick; transfer to a 9" pie pan. Trim dough, leaving a 1/2" overhang; fold edges under. Flute edges with fingers. Chill for 1 hour.

**3.** Heat oven to 325°. Pour water into a 4-quart saucepan to a depth of 1"; bring to a simmer over medium-low heat. Whisk together remaining sugar and salt, brown sugar, buttermilk, nutmeg, egg yolks, and egg. Set bowl over saucepan. Add remaining butter; cook, whisking frequently, until smooth and warm, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; let cool for 5 minutes. Pour mixture into chilled pie shell. Bake until center is just set, 45-50 minutes. Transfer pie to cooling rack; let cool completely before serving, about 2 hours.



ABOVE: BOB NICOLA (LEFT) AND CHRIS GARLOCH, COOKS AT FIGARETTI'S IN WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA.



LEFT: COAUTHOR TODD COLEMAN'S ROOM AT REILLEY'S ARMS MOTEL, IN WEST VIRGINIA, WHERE THE TV WORKED BUT THE MAGIC FINGERS DIDN'T. RIGHT: A VIEW FROM U.S. HIGHWAY 421 IN INDIANA.







# Pinot Noir Pilgrimage

Oregon's cool, green Willamette Valley lies at roughly the same latitude as France's Burgundy region and has a similar climate, which happens to be perfect for growing pinot noir grapes. Over the past couple of decades, a burgeoning community of winemakers has introduced sophisticated wines evincing the best of old-world technique while drawing inspiration from Oregon's unique terroir. The catch? Because many of these producers release fewer than 3,500 cases per vintage, distribution is extremely limited. To sample them all, intrepid oenophiles must take to the region's picturesque, two-lane highways.

I launched a tour in the Oregon town of Dundee, where I met one of the region's most ardent advocates for artisanally made pinot noir: John Paul of **Cameron Winery** (8200 Worden Hill Road, Dundee; 503/538-0336). His single-vineyard pinots deliver a powerful sense of place, as do his chardonnay and his proprietary blend of Italian varieties, the Giuliano, a lush Friulian-style white.

Up an oak- and fern-fringed road above the nearby town of Dayton, **De Ponte Cellars** (17545 Archery Summit Road, Dayton; 503/864-3698) produces traditional pinot noirs as well as tart and mineral-laced wines from old-vine melon de bourgogne grapes. "Every year the wines get better," winemaker Isa-



THE BARN THAT HOUSES THE WINEMAKING OPERATION AT BRICK HOUSE VINEYARDS IN NEWBURG, OREGON.



belle Dutartre told me. "In 20 years I shall be an old woman, but these wines will be something great."

In the mill town of Carlton, I found **Scott Paul Wines** (128 South Pine Street, Carlton; 503/852-7300) inside a converted creamery. With her emphasis on small-yield vineyards and delicately structured pinots, winemaker Kelley Fox makes her affection for Burgundy apparent in every bottle, including the luscious La Paulée and the refined, faintly floral Audrey.

Down the street at the **Carlton Winemakers Studio** (801 North Scott Street, Carlton; 503/852-6100), Oregon's first cooperative winemaking facility, I came away with a couple of bottles from the husband-and-wife team Stewart Boedecker and Athena Pappas, of

Boedecker Cellars. Their distinctive pinots—such as the Stewart, with its soft raspberry aromas and zingy acidity, and the well-rounded but powerful Athena—eloquently expressed their individual palates.

Finally, I looped back toward Portland to arrive at **Brick House Vineyards** (18200 Lewis Rogers Lane, Newburg; 503/538-5136). In all of winemaker Doug Tunnell's estate-grown, biodynamic wines, including a pear-tinged chardonnay and an earthy pinot noir sourced from a basalt-strewn stretch of vineyard known as the Boulder Block, the idiosyncrasies of the local landscape really come through. Now, after seeking out these wines at their source, I have an entirely new appreciation of what *terroir* really means. —Sarah Karnasiewicz







## ROAD TRIP

## RECIPE

## Figaretti's "Godfather II" Linguine

SERVES 2

This dish (facing page), along with linguine with red clam sauce and oven-baked rigatoni, is a mainstay of the Italian-American fare served at Figaretti's in Wheeling, West Virginia.

- Kosher salt, to taste
- 8 oz. dried linguine
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- 1/3 cup white wine
- 8 mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- 1/2 cup halved cherry tomatoes
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 8 large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 8 leaves basil, torn, plus more for garnish
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup grated asiago cheese
- 4 lemon wedges

1. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add linguine; cook until al dente, 8-10 minutes. Drain pasta; reserve 1/4 cup pasta water.

2. Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add green and red peppers, garlic, and onion; cook until they begin to soften, about 3 minutes. Add wine and mussels; cook, covered, until mussels open, about 2 minutes. Add reserved pasta water, tomatoes, butter, and shrimp and cook, stirring, until shrimp are just pink, about 1 minute. Add cooked linguine, toss to combine, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens and clings to pasta. Stir in basil and season with salt and pepper. Divide pasta between bowls. Sprinkle with more basil, asiago, and garnish with lemon wedges.

**THE MAN AND THE MIX** Today Duncan Hines is invariably associated with the boxed cake mixes that bear his name, and many Americans likely relegate that name to the category of fictional culinary icons that includes Betty Crocker and Uncle Ben. In fact, not only was Duncan Hines a real person, but, during much of the 20th century, before he lent his entrepreneurial acumen to food products in the 1950s, he reigned as one of the country's most influential restaurant critics. In the days before Zagat Surveys, the words "Recommended by Duncan Hines" were a seal of approval proudly displayed outside restaurants across the country. As the founder of the immensely popular *Adventures in Good Eating* series of travel guides, Hines changed the way Americans ate when traveling. Duncan Hines was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, in 1880. He first got the idea of reviewing restaurants for travelers when he was working as a salesman for printing businesses; driving around the country to meet with clients, he filled a notebook with jottings about his favorite places to eat along the way. Soon, with his wife, Florence, he was visiting restaurants on weekends too. According to *Duncan Hines: The Man Behind the Cake Mix* by Louis Hatchett (Mercer University Press, 2001), the two of them would stop "two or three times a day for waffles, sausage and eggs, and at least as often for fried chicken, baked clams or black-bottom pie". Frequently, the restaurants were unsanitary, the food unpalatable. There was usually good food in the cities, Hines said in an interview, "but in small towns and along the highways the average restaurant was a place of dirty tablecloths, crankcase coffee and pork chops cooked to a cinder". Determined to steer travelers clear of such perils, Hines published the first *Adventures in Good Eating* guide in 1936. The guide was a best seller and was updated every year until 1962, when the last edition was printed. Seen as a people's crusader and an incorruptible critic, Hines's became a trusted household name. In 1949, along with a business partner, Roy H. Park, Hines launched a line of products on the strength of his steadfast reputation. They were a huge success. Ice cream came first, followed by the popular cake mixes—white, yellow, devil's food, and spice—in 1951. Hines died in 1959. Today, we continue to take inspiration from his simple mission: to introduce travelers to "the refinements of good living, while seeing America". —Todd Coleman



LEFT: DUNCAN HINES EPHEMERA, INCLUDING VINTAGE MATCHBOOKS FROM RESTAURANTS REVIEWED IN THE *ADVENTURES IN GOOD EATING* TRAVEL GUIDES. RIGHT: DUNCAN HINES IN 1950.



dishes as Pork Chops the Tricky Way, Chicken Flakes in a Bird's Nest, Kentucky Chess Pie, and Yeasty Dinner Rolls. The cavernous kitchen is bright and airy and straight out of the 1940s. As with every place we've visited so far, many of the employees have been here for a long time. Two of them, Bruce Alcorn and Rawleigh Johnson, have worked in the kitchen for more than 30 years. "I'm just part

of the fixtures," says Alcorn. Alcorn and Johnson remember that back when U.S. 25 was the main thoroughfare—before the nearby interstate was put through—they served 200 to 300 people a day. "Now it's tweaked down," says Alcorn. "I've seen a lot of changes, competition coming in." One thing that hasn't changed is the spoonbread, a creamy corn bread soufflé served before every meal. It appears to

be the most popular item served. "People say that the spoonbread isn't the same as it was way back when," says Alcorn. "But me and Rawleigh made it back then; nothing's changed." We got here just in time; the tavern and hotel are scheduled to undergo an extensive renovation in a couple of months.

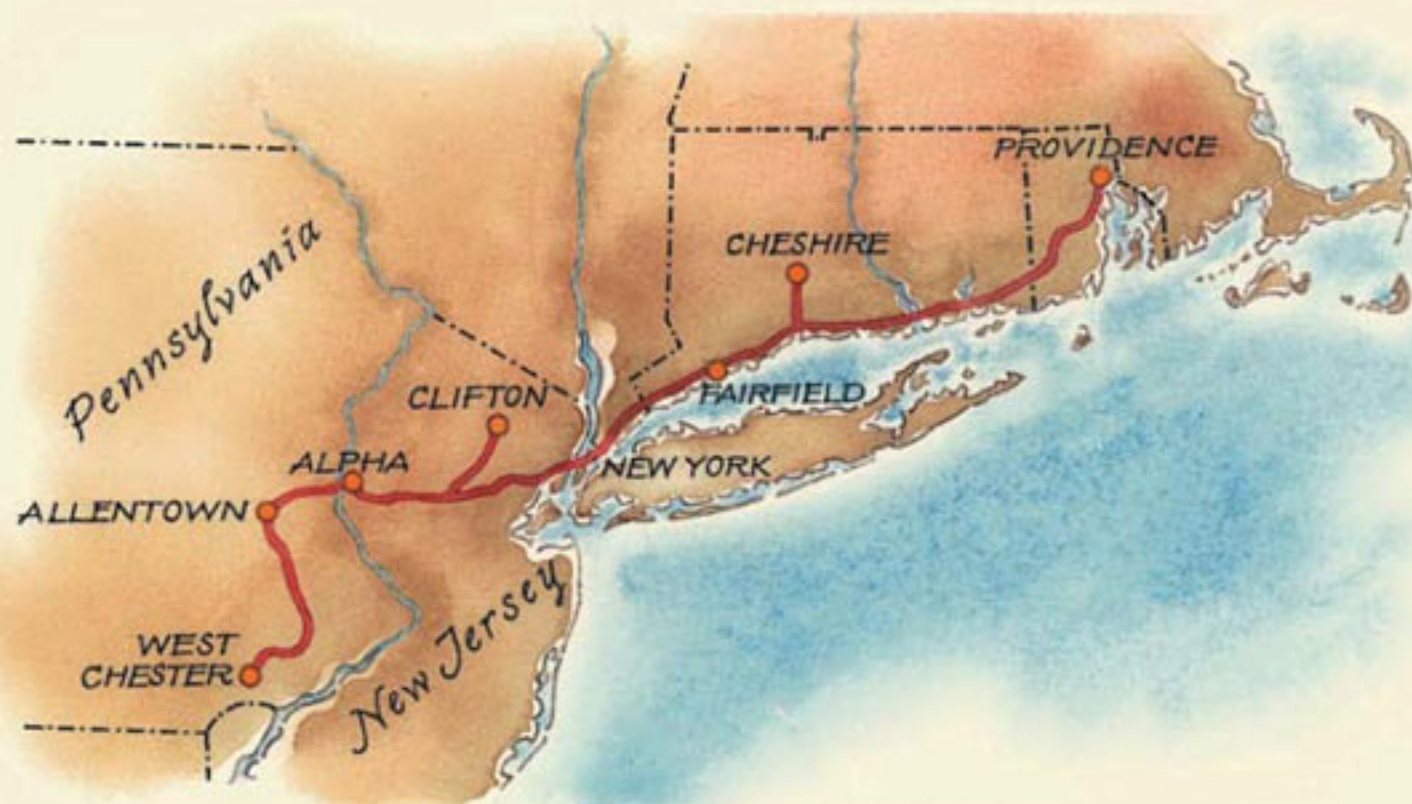
**Friday (Day 6)** We've exited the street into pitch darkness.

Once our eyes adjust to the dim light, we are able to make out an elegantly appointed wood-paneled room. The center of the room is occupied by a huge, rectangular bar. This is the Pine Club in Dayton, Ohio, a cool, windowless supper club. Dan Nooe, the general manager, greets us. "Sorry that we're not that busy," he says. Every booth is full. (continued on page 60)





# The Dogs of Summer



**H**ot dogs are the ideal road trip food—inexpensive, portable, ubiquitous. They're dependable, too: how often have you had a truly bad hot dog? Yet it's equally rare to encounter a truly outstanding hot dog, unless you're traveling the corridor running from eastern Pennsylvania to Rhode Island, a region with an unusually high concentration of above-average doggeries.

**Jimmy John's** (1507 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, Pennsylvania; 610/459-3083; no relation to the sandwich chain), outside Philadelphia, has been serving plump natural-casing franks on a hearty kaiser-style bun

since 1940. The ambience is endearingly wholesome, courtesy of wall-mounted vintage snapshots of long-time customers and a collection of model trains.

There's nothing wholesome about **Yocco's the Hot Dog King** (625 West Liberty Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania; 610/433-1950). A security camera scans the parking lot, half the customers are there to buy beer, and the anthropomorphized hot dog logo has an unmistakably pernicious visage. Still, Yocco's is duly legendary for its griddled dogs and piquant meat sauce.

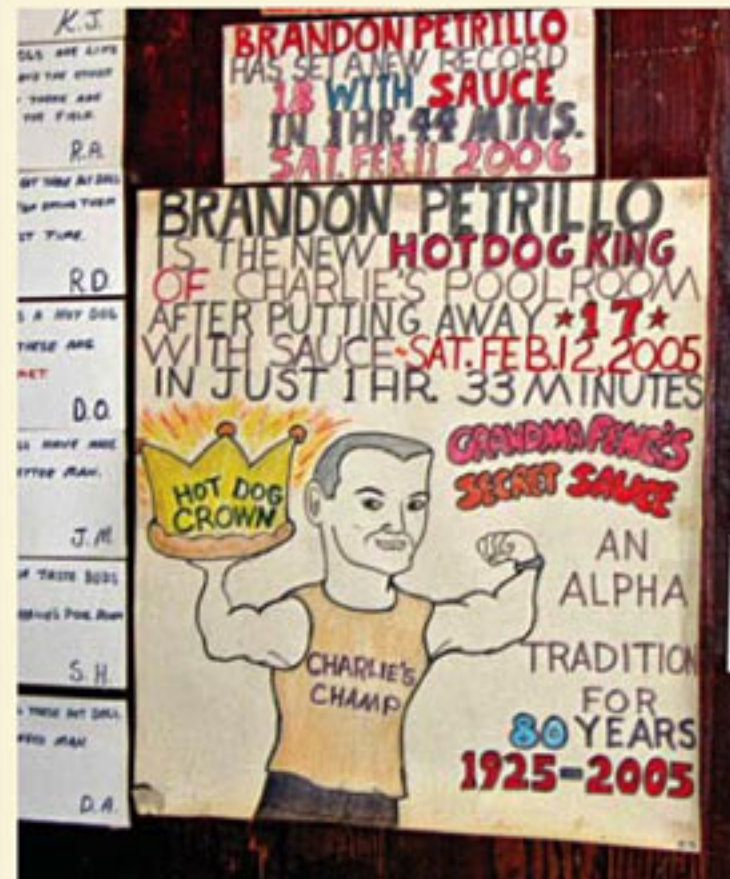
If Yocco's has an air of eccentricity, **Charlie's**

**Pool Room** (1122 East Boulevard, Alpha, New Jersey; 908/454-1364), in New Jersey, is positively surreal. The ramshackle game room with handwritten Christian screeds on the walls is run by Joe Fencz and his brother, John, who skillet-fries hot dogs and tops them with a deliciously pungent onion-based sauce devised by Grandma Fencz in 1925.

A hefty percentage of New Jersey frankfurter palaces deep-fry their dogs, but none do so with the panache of **Rutt's Hut** (417 River Road, Clifton; 973/779-8615). The juicy dogs, which split in the hot oil (hence the nickname "rippers"), pair beautifully with the shop's homemade cabbage-and-carrot relish.

Two Connecticut doggeries put notable spins on deep-frying: at **Rawley's** (1886 Post Road, Fairfield, Connecticut; 203/259-9023), franks start in the fryer and finish on the grill, while the staff at **Blackie's** (2200 Waterbury Road, Cheshire; 203/699-1819) says of its dogs, "Oh, no, they're not fried; they're boiled in oil." (Draw your own conclusions.)

Rhode Island dogs are distinctive in nomenclature ("hot wieners"), dimensions (short and blunt tipped), and toppings (typically mustard, onions, and a chili-like meat sauce). The quintessential spot for them is **Olneyville New York System** (20 Plainfield Street, Providence; 401/621-9500), where the counter men serve hot wieners with a generous side order of wisecracks. —Paul Lukas, a regular contributor to the *New York Times*, the *New York Sun*, and other publications



**FROM LEFT:** RAWLEY'S, A FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT, DRIVE-IN LEGENDARY FOR ITS DEEP-FRIED AND GRILLED HOT DOGS; "HOT WIENERS" AT OLNEYVILLE NEW YORK SYSTEM IN PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND; HAND-DRAWN SIGNS ADORN THE WALLS AT CHARLIE'S POOL ROOM IN ALPHA, NEW JERSEY.





SODA JERKS (FROM LEFT) ERIC JENKINS, RYAN BERLEY, AND MAC FEVER SAMPLE THE HOUSE-MADE ICE CREAM AT FRANKLIN FOUNTAIN IN PHILADELPHIA.



## Southbound Sugar Sortie

I'm crazy about sweets, especially homespun varieties that predate the era of high-fructose corn syrup. Last year, on a road trip from New York City to Austin, Texas, my boyfriend, Armando, and I made it a point to visit a number of legendary confectioneries and dessert spots along the way, places where candies, ices, pies, and other treats are made in much the same manner they were a century ago. Our first stop was the **Franklin Fountain** (116 Market Street, Philadelphia; 215/627-1899), in the Old City neighborhood of Philadelphia. The retro ice cream parlor, with its pressed-tin ceilings and marble countertops, dispenses house-made ice cream in flavors like teaberry gum, licorice, and mint chip, the last of which is run through with whorls of crème de menthe. We adored the phosphates—old-timey hand-mixed sodas

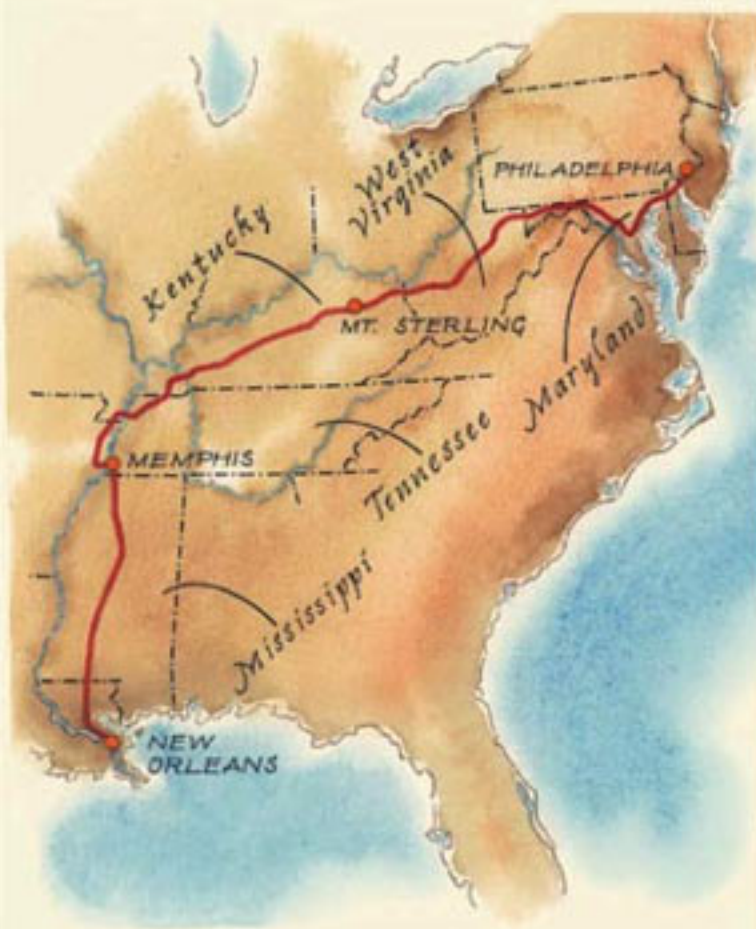
with a hint of tanginess thanks to the addition of a few drops of phosphoric acid—especially the Egyptienne Egg Shake, a combination of orange and rose syrups, soda water, Angostura bitters, and a whole egg.

Our next push south and west landed us outside Lexington, Kentucky, where we sought out **Ruth Hunt Candy Co.** (550 North Maysville Road, Mt. Sterling; 800/927-0302), maker of the storied Blue Monday candy bar. Pulled cream candy, a concoction of heavy cream and butter boiled in copper kettles and then stretched like taffy, is delicious on its own, but covered in chocolate for the Blue Monday it is melt-on-the-tongue transcendent. On a tour of the Ruth Hunt factory, founded in 1921, we observed the making of Bluegrass State specialties like bourbon balls (whiskey-flavored bonbons dipped in chocolate), as

they made their way through contraptions that have changed little since the early 20th century.

In Memphis we paid a visit to **Dinstuhl's Candies** (5280 Pleasant View, Memphis; 901/377-2639) to taste its famous hand-dipped, chocolate-covered Louisiana strawberries and sample the truffles, brandied cherries, pecan brittles, divinities (sweet, vanilla-infused whipped egg whites), and other specialties made on the premises. Dinstuhl's, we were delighted to learn, also sells other confectioners' wares, like the ethereal peppermint straws made by Hammond's, a company based in Denver, Colorado.

Our most belly-filling find was waiting down the road in New Orleans. On the last night of our journey, we discovered the fried "hand pies"—single-serving turnovers in a variety of flavors—made by the **Simon Hubig Company** (2417 Dauphine Street, New Orleans; 504/945-2181). We were particularly fond of the sweet potato, lemon, and apple versions; like all Hubig's pies, they were deep-fried, slathered in a sugary glaze while still hot, and individually wrapped in waxed paper. In operation since 1922, Hubig's shut down after Hurricane Katrina but, after a painstaking rebuilding, was back in business a few months later; today its pies are once again sold in convenience stores across Louisiana. That such an outstanding version of this classic Southern treat could be found for a mere 99 cents, unceremoniously parked beside the cash register of a gas station, made us admire the manufacturer's perseverance all the more. We felt it only appropriate, then, to have some of Hubig's pies not only for dessert that night but also for breakfast the next morning. —Liz Pearson, an Austin, Texas-based writer and cook and a former *SAVEUR* test kitchen director





## ROAD TRIP

## RECIPE

## Boone Tavern's Spoonbread

SERVES 6-8

This starter, one of the most popular offerings at Boone Tavern, which has featured the specialty for more than 60 years, is a creamy-centered corn bread pudding that rises like a soufflé.

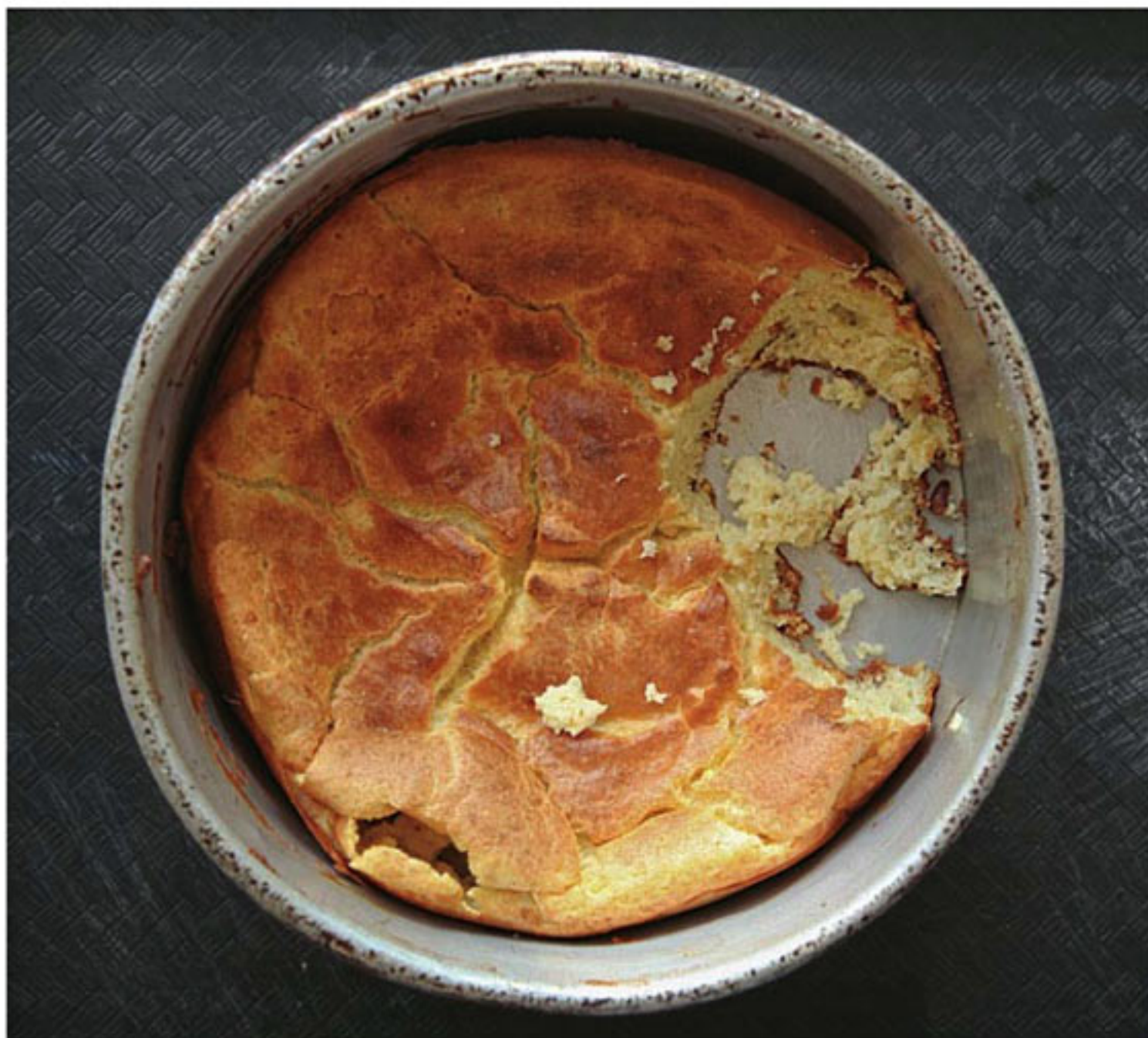
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter (1 tbsp. softened, 3 tbsp. melted)
- 3 cups milk
- 1 1/4 cups finely ground white cornmeal (see page 97)
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. fine salt
- 2 eggs, well beaten

**1.** Grease a 9" round cake pan with some of the softened butter. Cut out a parchment paper circle to fit inside the pan, nestle it into the bottom, and grease the paper with the remaining softened butter. Set the prepared pan aside.

**2.** In a 2-quart saucepan, bring the milk to a boil, whisking occasionally, over high heat. While whisking, pour in the cornmeal in a steady stream. Whisk vigorously to incorporate the cornmeal, for about 1 minute. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside to let the cornmeal mixture cool to room temperature.

**2.** Heat oven to 350°. Transfer the cornmeal mixture to the bowl of a standing mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Add the remaining butter, baking powder, salt, and eggs and mix on medium speed until uniform and aerated, about 15 minutes.

**3.** Pour cornmeal batter into the prepared pan and bake until golden brown and puffy and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 20 minutes. Serve immediately.



**TOP:** THE SPOONBREAD AT BOONE TAVERN. **ABOVE LEFT:** OUTSIDE BOONE TAVERN. **ABOVE RIGHT:** KATHI HOWELL, HOSTESS OF THE PINE CLUB, A HALF-CENTURY-OLD STEAK HOUSE IN DAYTON, OHIO.

(continued from page 57) "Unless we're double around the bar, we're not busy." The tables are loaded with classic steak house food: plump strip steaks and rib eyes, sweet-and-sour stewed tomatoes with a topping of buttered croutons, herring slathered in sour cream, creamed spinach, and shredded iceberg lettuce topped with thick blue cheese dressing.

Following our dinner of calf's liver with sautéed onions and chopped steak, we decide to stay at a bed-and-breakfast not far from downtown Dayton. The rooms are stuffed with every doodad imaginable. Inside Todd's, there's a Howdy Doody doll in a baby carriage. Interminable layers of lace curtains keep the outside world out. A floor-to-ceiling stuffed rabbit

guards James's room, at the end of the hall.

**Saturday (Day 7)** We didn't sleep well at the B&B. We spend the morning and early afternoon driving in silence through Ohio. Several hours later we are sitting at the bar of Figaretti's, a spaghetti house in the West Virginia town of Wheeling. "We have a lot of loyal customers," says the bartender,

Jorge Shavedra. "People who have been following Figaretti's for 50 years—they come from all over." Tony Figaretti Sr., the owner, who also happens to be the boxing commissioner of West Virginia, is greeting customers at the door; he's clad in loafers and wearing a loose gold bracelet. "Hey you! How ya doing?" he bellows to a smartly dressed man coming through the door. "This guy always shows



## ROAD TRIP

me up. His shirt. His shoes."

Five brothers started Figaretti's back in 1948. It used to be called Figaretti's Cricket Club. We sit below a gilded, framed portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Figaretti. Todd has a manhattan and nibbles on some garlic bread. Then we dig into the Godfather II, a delicious dish of linguine tossed with shrimp, mussels, peppers, onions, and tomatoes in a white wine and garlic sauce, sprinkled with grated parmesan cheese.

We decide to drive several miles south, to Moundsville. Halfway into town, in front of an abandoned bowling al-

**W** Recipes for a pine cone cocktail and fried turkey livers, plus a photo gallery of vintage matchbooks and more, all at [SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112](http://SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112)

ley beneath a darkening early-evening sky, we spot the Reiley's Arms Motel. We pull over and check in to our rooms. We seem to be the only guests. James settles down in front of a Charlton Heston movie. Todd pops a quarter into the coin slot affixed to his bed's headboard, but the magic fingers don't work. He falls asleep anyway.

**Sunday (Day 8)** Homeward bound. Running behind schedule, and feeling the weight of the coming workweek, we resign ourselves to Interstate 80. We speed eastward, stopping for dinner at an overly air-conditioned Denny's somewhere in Pennsylvania. We get stuck in traffic as we approach the George Washington Bridge, giving ourselves plenty of time to peer across the Hudson River at the lights of New York City, the end of the road. 🚗

**THE PANTRY, page 97:** A source for vintage editions of the *Adventures in Good Eating* travel guides.

## THE GUIDE

## DUNCAN HINES ROAD TRIP

Dinner, per person, with drinks and tip:

INEXPENSIVE Under \$20 MODERATE \$20-\$60 EXPENSIVE over \$60

Here are a few highlights from Todd Coleman and James Oseland's Chicago-to-New York road odyssey, during which they sought out restaurants featured in Duncan Hines's *Adventures in Good Eating* culinary-travel guides, published from the 1930s through the 1960s. We've also included a few road-savvy resources to keep handy in the glove compartment or bookmarked on your laptop for your next road trip.

## WHERE TO EAT

**BOONE TAVERN HOTEL AND RESTAURANT** 100 Main Street, Berea, Kentucky (800-366-9358; [www.boonetavernhotel.com](http://www.boonetavernhotel.com)). Moderate. This century-old restaurant on the Berea College campus serves contemporary fare like brown sugar pork chops with apple-chestnut jam alongside classic Southern dishes like fried green tomatoes and spoonbread, a corn bread soufflé.

**FIGARETTI'S RESTAURANT** 1035 Mt. DeChantal Road, Wheeling, West Virginia (304/243-5625). Moderate. In a small city near the border of Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania, Figaretti's serves up some of the best Italian-American food to be had for miles around. Try the Dino Special: linguine tossed with marinara sauce, shrimp, and mussels.

**HOLLYHOCK HILL** 8110 North College Avenue, Indianapolis (317/251-2294; [www.hollyhockhill.com](http://www.hollyhockhill.com)). Moderate. This 80-year-old family-style restaurant, with its welcoming staff and homey décor, exudes small-town warmth in the heart of Indiana's

capital city. The Hoosier Fried Chicken dinner is a must.

**KLAS** 5734 West Cermak Road, Cicero, Illinois (708/652-0795; [www.klasrestaurant.com](http://www.klasrestaurant.com)). Moderate. A Bohemian confection of arched doorways, stained-glass windows, and eclectic bric-a-brac, Klas has been a Czech institution in the Chicago suburb of Cicero for almost 90 years. From duck liver and onions to roast loin of pork with potato dumplings, the place is both Old World and old-school.

**THE PINE CLUB** 1926 Brown Street, Dayton, Ohio (937/228-5371; [www.thepineclub.com](http://www.thepineclub.com)). Expensive. Dayton has changed quite a bit over the past 50 years, but the Pine Club hasn't. The classy, wood-paneled supper club is famous for its "extra heavy" strip-loin steak, iceberg lettuce and roquefort salad, and "loaded" baked potatoes.

**SMOKEY PIG BAR-B-Q** 2520 Louisville Road, Bowling Green, Kentucky (270/781-1712). Inexpensive. Monroe County, near where this popular spot is located, lays claim to its own, unique kind of 'cue. Try the thinly sliced pork shoulder, which is cooked over charred hickory wood and slathered with a spicy, vinegar-based sauce.

**STRONGBOW INN** 2405 East U.S. Highway 30, Valparaiso, Indiana (219/462-5121; [www.strongbowinn.com](http://www.strongbowinn.com)). Moderate. Popular since the 1940s, this turkey-centric eatery near Valparaiso University once included a turkey farm, an inn, and a filling station. Today only the family-style restaurant and its adjoining bakery remain.

## WHAT TO DO

**THE KENTUCKY LIBRARY & MUSEUM, WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY** 1906 College Heights Boulevard # 11092, Bowling Green, Kentucky (270/745-2592; [www.wku.edu/library/kylm](http://www.wku.edu/library/kylm)). The library recently installed a permanent interactive exhibit devoted to the life of native son, travel writer, and cake mix entrepreneur Duncan Hines. Don't miss the re-creation of Hines's kitchen, complete with his 1953 General Electric stove.

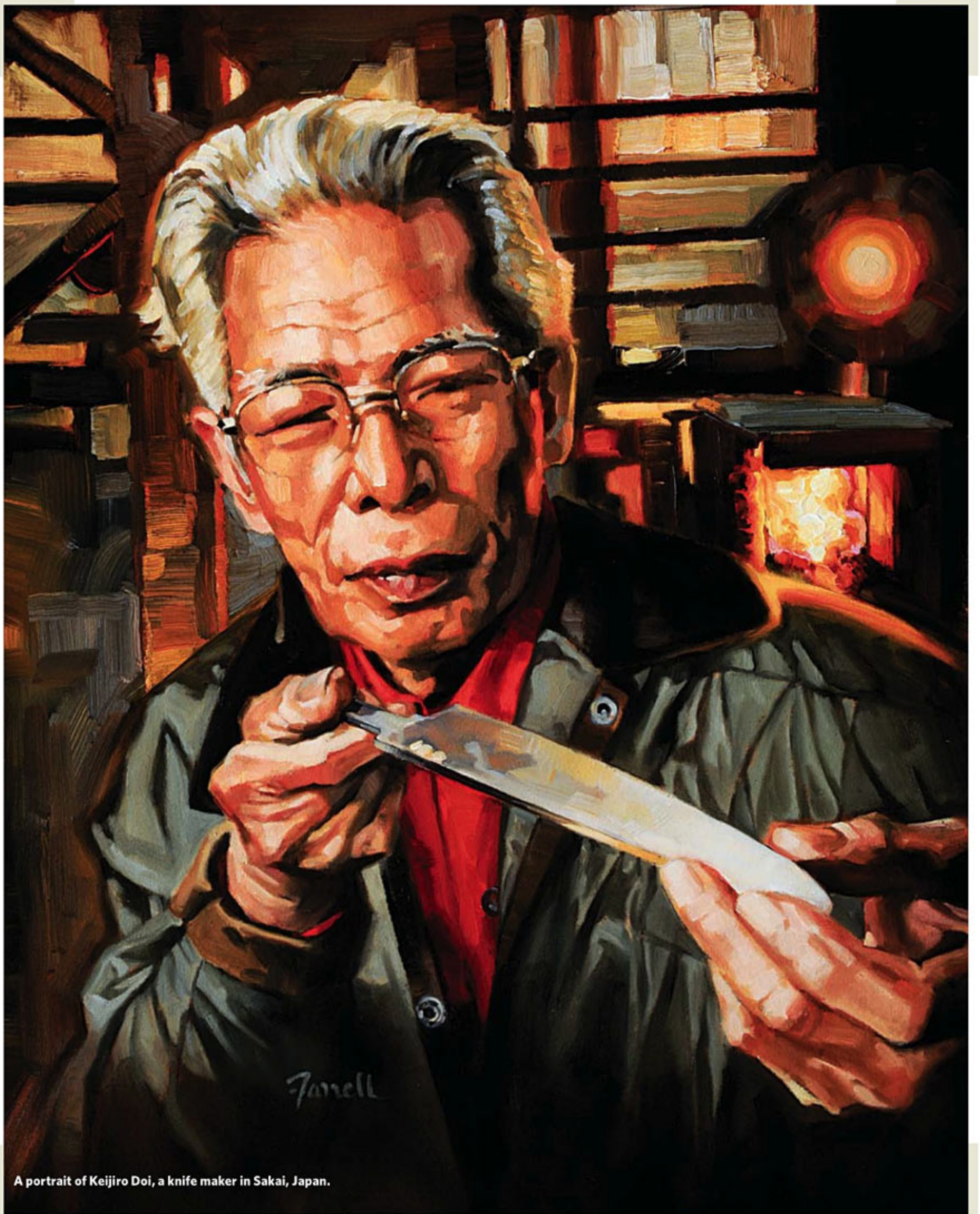
## RESOURCES

**CHOWHOUND.COM** A highlight of this inexhaustible, country-spanning site, dedicated to "those who live to eat", is the regional food boards, which contain hundreds of impassioned suggestions on the best eateries from coast to coast.

**ROAD FOOD BY JANE AND MICHAEL STERN (HARPER-COLLINS, 2008)** The newest edition of this road-eats bible is every bit as tempting as the 1976 original. The corresponding website ([www.roadfood.com](http://www.roadfood.com)) offers the option to rate, review, and recommend restaurants.

**ROAD TRIP USA BY JAMIE JENSEN (AVALON TRAVEL, 2006)** Jensen's book makes a convincing effort to steer road-trippers away from "soulless" interstates clogged with chain restaurants and toward two-lane highways and the charming towns and cities they traverse. Contains 11 ambitious, interstate-free itineraries.





A portrait of Keiji Doi, a knife maker in Sakai, Japan.



# MASTER OF THE BLADE

IN JAPAN, THE ART OF MAKING, AND WIELDING, A KNIFE LIES AT THE VERY FOUNDATION OF CUISINE BY KENNETH WAPNER

I WAS ON A PILGRIMAGE OF SORTS. I'd come west by bullet train from Tokyo to Sakai, the small city, six miles south of Osaka, that is the knife-making capital of Japan. In my bag I carried a hand-forged Japanese yanagi, a traditional sushi knife, that I'd bought almost 30 years earlier. I'd purchased it for \$100 from the sushi chef under whom I was apprenticing at Soho Robata, a Japanese restaurant in Manhattan, long since closed, where I worked for a year while finishing college. Don S., as the sushi chef was known to his employees, told me that the knife, which he'd brought from Japan himself, was symbolic of my willingness to learn. Removing the gleaming, nine-and-a-half-inch-long blade from its wood case, I felt as though I had acquired a small sword.

At the time, sushi was really catching on in the United States, and, as an aspiring cook and budding Japanophile, I was smitten by it. Sushi seemed to embody the traits I loved the most about Japanese culture: refinement, elegance, cleanliness, and simplicity. I was taken with the way sushi was so absolutely handmade and, specifically, the way a good sushi chef used his knife. The cuisine seemed literally to flow from the cuts he made. It was the blade rather than the burner that transformed ingredients into gorgeous food.

Though my yanagi was designed principally for the preparation of raw fish, the first thing Don S. had me do with it was use the slender blade to slice a cucumber into long scrolls that, he insisted, had to be so thin that a newspaper could be read through them. Having done a passable job, I was farmed out to various stations in the kitchen, where I prepped vegetables and butchered meat using conventional knives; my yanagi almost always remained sheathed (novice that I

was, I was rarely allowed to touch fish). Still, I was expected to elevate my knife work swiftly to the level of dexterity shown by the rest of the staff. The tip of the finger that I amputated and the hideous gashes that I not infrequently incurred were considered essential parts of my apprenticeship. I was never given break time after I cut myself. Instead, Don S. would unwrap the tobacco from one of his cigarettes and stuff it into the wound, which he then wrapped tightly with surgical tape. The tobacco, he assured me, acted as both a coagulant and an antibiotic.

I couldn't help thinking that I was being inducted into an ancient brotherhood that practiced the martial stoicism and precision of the Way of the Sword, the Japanese style of fencing central to any samurai's training, and I quickly came to understand how important the knife was to Japanese cooking. Whether they were using a yanagi or any of a half dozen or so other specialized types of Japanese cooking knives—heavy, wood- or bone-handled marvels of iron and carbon steel—my Japanese counterparts at Soho Robata exhibited blade-wielding skills that far exceeded anything I'd experienced while working in other restaurant kitchens.

I didn't stay at Soho Robata long enough to master the knife skills that Don S. demanded from his sushi apprentices; indeed, I eventually gave up on being a professional cook, though I retained my passion for all things Japanese and have traveled to the country often. What's more, I failed to respect one of the

KENNETH WAPNER's most recent article for SAVEUR was "Inside Sushi" (October 2006).





醉心  
KUROKI

1

大崎  
大崎

2

大崎  
大崎

3

大崎  
大崎

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大崎  
大崎

5



## JAPANESE KNIVES

core principles of the samurai tradition: the meticulous care of one's sword. Although I cherished my yanagi and it stayed with me long after my stint at Soho Robata, through multiple moves and marriages and the onward march of middle age, I didn't maintain its edge and polish. I injured and blunted the yanagi and allowed it to rust, having grown accustomed to factory-honed stainless-steel knives, which are more resistant to damage and oxidation but whose blades can never attain the sharpness of a handmade Japanese knife's. The latter consists of a hard, carbon-steel core bonded to a softer, iron jacket. Unlike double-edged Western-style knives, many traditional Japanese blades must be carefully sharpened from only one side to expose the carbon steel edge and should remain completely flat on the other. In any case, I didn't have the special whetstone needed for honing and polishing my blade.

Eventually, I came to view the knife as a symbol for my own aging body and for all the aspirations, like learning to make professional-quality sushi, that I'd not quite managed to realize over the years. And I became fascinated by its origins. I wanted to see the kind of forge it was fired in and learn about the craftsmanship and tradition that I intuited whenever I held it. Just as important, I wanted to see whether it could, in the hands of a master, reacquire at least a semblance of its original luster and edge.

METALWORKING IN SAKAI goes back to at least the fifth century A.D., when smiths were brought to the city to forge the hoes and spades used in the construction of a huge tomb for Emperor Nintoku. By the 1700s, Sakai had become the sword-making and munitions capital of Japan and remained so until World War II. After Japan's surrender to the Allied powers, much of the energy and craftsmanship that went into forging swords was redirected to the fabrication of cooking knives. Accordingly, the qualities cherished by a warrior in his

sword—strength, balance, and, of course, a peerless edge—manifested themselves in the knives made in Sakai.

Today, traditional Japanese cooking knives are the finest, and the most expensive, in the world. Knife making remains a major industry in Sakai, though more and more knife makers there and in other parts of Japan are manufacturing Western-style cutlery suited to a younger generation's more globalized tastes. Importers and sellers I'd talked to told me that traditional knife making in Japan is a slowly dying industry; the work is physically taxing and not particularly remunerative. Within a generation or two, they said, the traditional handmade Japanese knife may be a thing of the past.

My first stop in Sakai was the workshop of the knife maker Keiji Doi, known as Master Doi. I had been provided with an introduction by Saori Kawano, the founder and president of Korin, a major U.S. knife importer, who was assisting me in my quest. I had no idea what to expect. The journey by bullet and commuter train from Tokyo had been quick and uneventful, and Sakai itself was, to judge from the view from my hotel window, an unremarkable jumble of concrete buildings. And yet, I felt a profound sense of anticipation at the prospect of meeting Master Doi. He was,

after all, the 80-year-old son of a sword maker and one of the most renowned blade makers in Japan.

Saori met me at my hotel the following morning, on a bright early-spring day, and accompanied me to Master Doi's workshop, which occupied a small, warehouse-like building in the old port section of the city. The work space was small and sparsely appointed, furnished with a clay forge that, I later learned, his father had helped him build by hand more than 30 years earlier. The place smelled of coal and pine-charcoal smoke, which swirled up through the shafts of light coming through high windows cut into the warehouse's metal walls.


When we arrived, Master Doi, a thin, *(continued on page 68)*



## FIVE PRINCIPAL STYLES OF JAPANESE KNIFE

The manufacture of highly specialized cooking knives in Japan became widespread in the 16th century, when blacksmiths working for members of Japan's noble soldier class, the samurai, competed against one another to create the best swords and knives. Eventually, as different regional cuisines began to develop across Japan, merchants began learning the craft. In the east, where more-rustic cooking methods reigned, stout and functional straight blades were predominant; in the west, more-delicate, pointed styles found favor. Hand-forged Japanese knives, the best of which are fabricated in the city of Sakai, are usually made in one of five different styles. The knife known as kamagata usuba **1** originated in Osaka and has a distinctively curved tip suited to intricate vegetable-carving methods, as well as juliennes. The kamagata usuba shown on the facing page has a handle of Japanese yew, an evergreen native to Japan, and—a rarity among old-style Japanese knives—a blade of stainless steel. Less delicate kitchen tasks like butchering poultry and breaking down whole fish traditionally call for a deba **2**, which has a broad, wedge-shaped blade that can easily cut through bone and cartilage. The usuba **3**, originally from Tokyo, is considered the most versatile of traditional Japanese knives; its sturdy, wide blade is well designed for slicing vegetables. The usuba is the preferred tool for katsuramuki, the technique of cutting vegetables (like daikon and cucumber) into paper-thin sheets and scrolls. The usuba shown is made of carbon steel; its handle, attached to a buffalo horn collar, was carved from magnolia wood. The takobiki **4**, also developed in Tokyo, is customarily used for preparing sashimi and, especially, octopus. The type of knife shown is called a suminagashi takobiki, which is distinguished by an elegant wave pattern on the blade, a result of a special forging process. Used mainly in the preparation of sushi and sashimi, the venerated yanagi **5** has a thin, elongated blade and a slightly curved tip that make it ideal for producing paper-thin slices from fish filets. The yanagi shown was forged by the master blacksmith Keiji Doi in Sakai and has a core of carbon steel fused to an iron jacket; a piece of carved water buffalo horn attaches the blade to the ebony handle. (See THE PANTRY, page 97, for sources.) —Ben Mims



A portrait of Masaharu Morimoto, a Japanese chef, wearing a dark blue chef's jacket with his name embroidered on the sleeve. He has a goatee and is looking directly at the camera.

## Iron and Steel

We recently invited Masaharu Morimoto to the *SAVEUR* test kitchen to demonstrate two fundamental Japanese knife techniques that exemplify the precision knife work at the heart of Japanese cuisine. Though Morimoto, chef and owner of the Japanese fusion restaurants in New York and Philadelphia that bear his name and a legendary competitor on the *Iron Chef* television show, owns a collection of more than 80 custom-forged blades, he uses only a handful of traditional Japanese knives—including the yanagi and the kamagata usuba shown on these pages (see “Five Principal Styles of Japanese Knife”, page 65)—for his day-to-day cooking. —Hunter Lewis

## Katsuramuki »

Crunchy raw daikon radish is an essential garnish in Japanese cooking; in this preparation, Morimoto, using a technique called *katsuramuki*, transforms the daikon to an ultrafine julienne. **1** Holding his broad-bladed *kamagata usuba* with a relaxed grip, Morimoto trims the ends off the daikon. **2** Then he uses the knife's tip to cut the vegetable into paper-thin sheets to create a six-foot-long scroll. **3** Next, Morimoto cuts the scroll into three-inch-wide squares. **4** He stacks the squares in a neat pile. **5** Finally, using the fingers of his left hand as a guide (taking care to keep his fingertips tucked in), he slices the sheets into a julienne with a firm, repeated up-and-down motion.



## « Sharpening

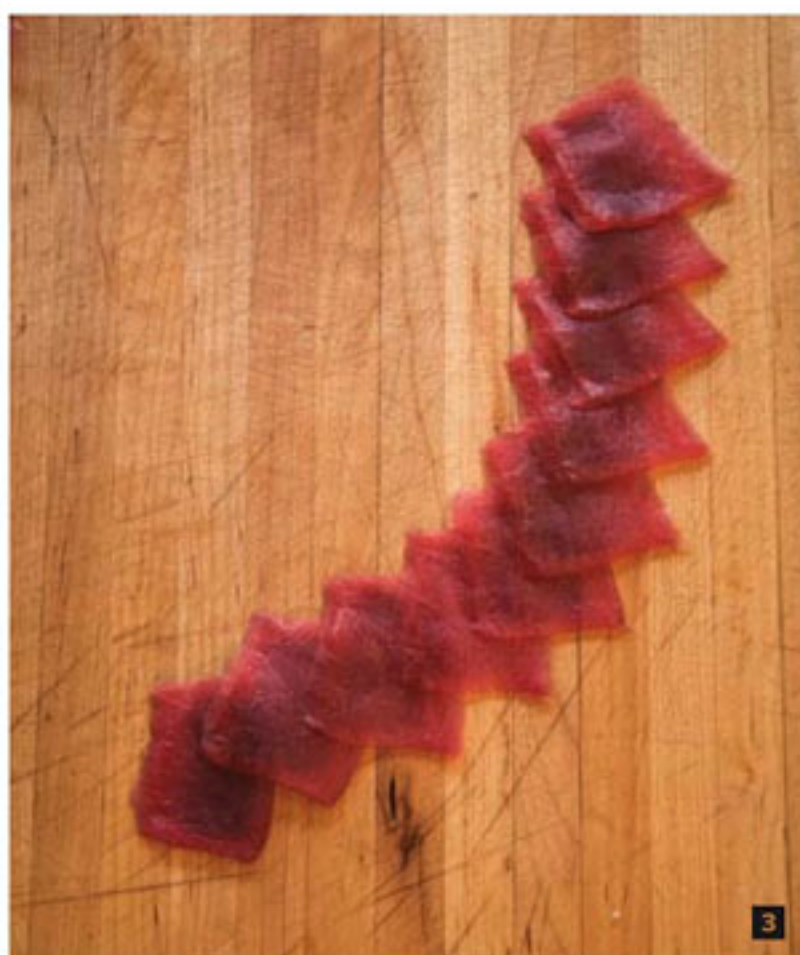
The single-edged blades of traditional Japanese knives require regular care and maintenance. A well-sharpened edge—achieved through the use of a fine-grained whetstone (see *THE PANTRY*, page 97, for a source)—is essential for the techniques shown on these pages. **1** Holding the knife at a 45-degree angle to his body, with the blade facing him, Morimoto places the blade's cutting edge almost flat against the moistened stone and very gently pushes the blade away from him repeatedly across the stone, working his way from tip to hilt. **2** To determine whether his blade is sharp enough, he runs the edge lightly across his thumbnail; if the blade snags, he deems the knife ready to use. (This is not a method we recommend for home cooks.)





## Sogi Giri »

This elegant sashimi preparation offers a beautiful example of how Japanese chefs use the knife, and often nothing more, to achieve a striking aesthetic transformation between kitchen and plate. **1** Working from one end of an eight-inch-long slab of raw bluefin tuna, Morimoto holds his yanagi at an angle and makes a bias cut, smoothly pulling the knife back toward him, slicing from hilt to tip while resting his fingers gently on the fish **2**—a knife technique called *sogi giri*—to produce paper-thin, diamond-shaped slices. He repeats the same cut, working his way across the slab, laying each slice aside as he goes. **3** He lays the slices so that the corner of one overlaps the corner of another, creating a contiguous, curving strip. **4** As a final flourish, he rolls the strip of slices into a tuna “rose”.





## JAPANESE KNIVES

(continued from page 65) bespectacled man with a shock of hair that was the same color as the iron and steel with which he worked, emerged from the back of the shop. Saori, acting as interpreter, made the introductions, and Master Doi seemed quite willing to let me watch him work. He stepped spryly into a waist-deep pit in front of one of the forges and used a handle to adjust the pressure on a motorized bellows. The coals in the forge hissed, crackled, and flared, turning from red to yellow to white. Then Master Doi gripped a flattened shaft of carbon steel between a pair of tongs and inserted it into the fire, turning the tongs with precision and purpose, before removing the steel, setting it on an iron block called a kanatoko, and placing a thin piece of iron on top of the steel shaft. Then, with a deafening din, he beat the iron outer layer and the carbon-steel core together using a mechanical belt hammer, a device that had not been around when Master Doi was a young apprentice, he explained.

Next, Master Doi returned the roughly welded blade to the fire, pulling it out at intervals to fine-tune it with a small hammer. Fi-

## I WAS MOVED BY THE NOTION THAT MY KNIFE, AFTER TRAVELING SO FAR, HAD BY SOME STRANGE TURN OF FATE RETURNED TO ITS MAKER

nally, after repeated heating and shaping and careful inspection, when he judged the moment to be right, he plunged the blade into a bathtub-shaped recess in the floor filled with water that, according to Master Doi, has not been changed in decades, except for the occasional topping off.

"The timing for making blades is all-important," Master Doi told me, explaining how plunging the hot steel into water at just the right moment tempers, or toughens, the metal. "And the fire must be perfect. Perhaps once a day I'll make a blade where something special happens. I hold it up after I'm finished forging it, and it has a special feel to it. Something is there in its strength and balance and hardness, and I think, I know that it will keep its edge ten times longer than an ordinary knife. I can imagine it in a chef's hand."

When Master Doi finally laid aside the blade he'd been working on, I reached tentatively into my bag and produced my old yanagi. I was eager to know how it ranked in the pantheon of Japanese knives. After all, Don S. had selected it himself, and I speculated that the quality of the knife somehow reflected the level of potential the sushi chef saw in his young apprentice. Master Doi removed my knife from its wood case and carefully appraised the tarnished blade. "Not bad," he said. "Not top quality, but well balanced and not too badly bent, considering its age."

Next, Master Doi inspected the seal embossed on the blade. He explained that the knife had been made for Masamoto, a cutlery shop near Tsukiji, the huge Tokyo wholesale fish market. Then he paused, slowly turning the knife over in his hands a few times. After a moment, he told me that he and his father might well have forged this very blade. The distinctive curve by the hilt, where the blade meets the handle, was a signature of theirs, and during the late 1970s they were producing just these types of blades for Masamoto. I was moved by the notion that my knife, after traveling so far, had by some strange turn of fate returned to its maker. But my mission in Sakai was only half complete.

I WAS ENCOURAGED BY MASTER DOI'S appraisal of my yanagi and eager to restore some measure of its original power and beauty. So, that afternoon, Saori and I drove to a narrow-laned residential neighborhood to pay a visit to Shinpei Ino, who, Saori assured me, was one of the most sought-after knife sharpeners in the country. Like the blacksmiths themselves, Japanese knife sharpeners, who finish and polish the freshly forged blades as well as straighten and hone older ones, master their craft only after years of practice.


Ino, a bespectacled man with longish, shaggy gray hair, welcomed me into his cluttered, concrete-floored work area, which was an extension of his home. Before attending to my knife, he showed me how he finished Master Doi's knives. First, he took the blade and ran it over two large, motor-driven synthetic-stone grinding wheels; the first would shape a rough edge, and the second would be used for finer sculpting and sharpening, followed by further honing and polishing on a number of other wheels. Throughout the grinding process, Ino repeatedly set the blade between wooden blocks to make sure it was straightening properly. Finally, he used waxed,

handheld stones to refine and polish the edge and give the blade's face its distinctive, mirrorlike patina.


I asked whether I might present Ino with my knife. He agreed to resharpen it. Before he even tried to get an edge with the first wheel, he spent some time using the second wheel to grind away the nicks and rust spots on the blade's face. As he sharpened the blade, he straightened it with the wood blocks. After a half hour or so, some of the blade had been worn away, but my knife was razor sharp—even sharper, Ino assured me, than when it was brand-new. There was still a speckling of rust that, Ino said, would be a permanent part of the knife's character but should not adversely affect its performance.

I BID INO GOOD-BYE and headed to the heart of Sakai's commercial district. I had one last appointment in the city: at the shop of Junro Aoki, a merchant who acts as a liaison between the artisans who forge and finish the knives and the

retail outlets that sell them. Aoki adds the final flourishes to the

 A slide show of chef Masaharu Morimoto demonstrating knife techniques, at [SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112](http://SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112)

knives before they're shipped to be sold, matching the blades with wood or, occasionally, bone handles, which he attaches himself before placing the knives in wood sheaths. Aoki told me that he had a deep reverence for the traditional knife makers with whom he works. "I am aware that it takes an entire life to get to the level of skill and craftsmanship I see in the knives the craftsmen give me," he said. "I add my own touch, my own soul and passion." It is the name of Aoki's company that is etched into the blades of the knives he finishes and packages.

Aoki replaced the stained and battered wooden sheath in which I'd carried my knife around for all those years with a pristine new one. As I walked out of his shop, I felt that my knife had been reborn. Perhaps I'd still use it only on special occasions, but I wouldn't neglect it as I had in the past. I fixed Master Doi's face in mind and vowed to keep the yanagi, presented to me by my sushi chef so long ago, clean and sharp. 

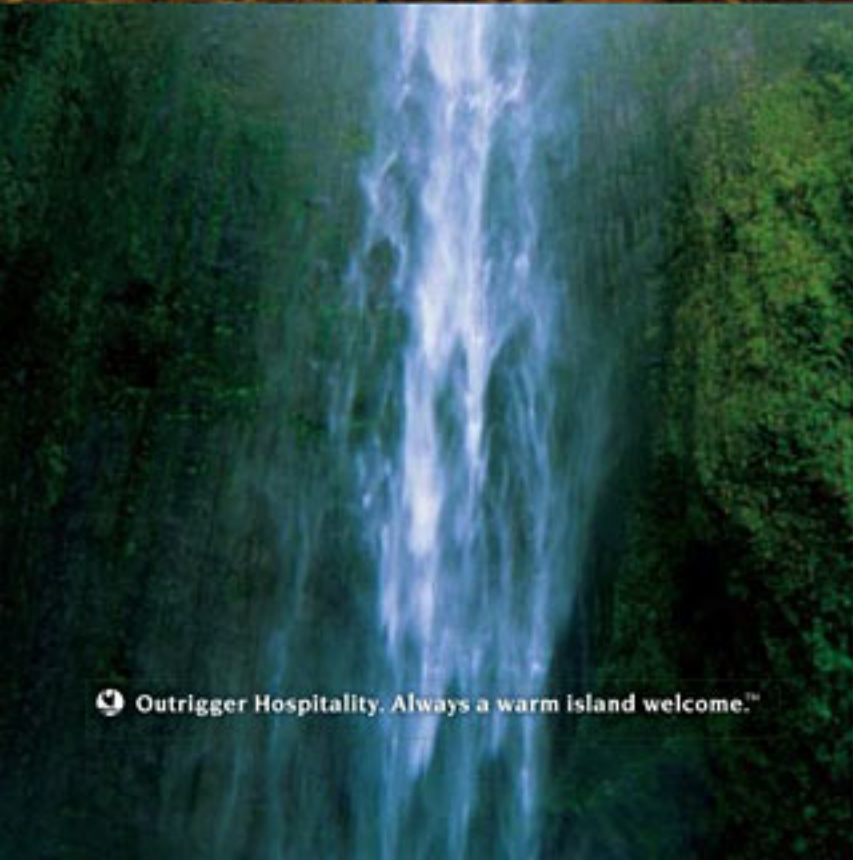
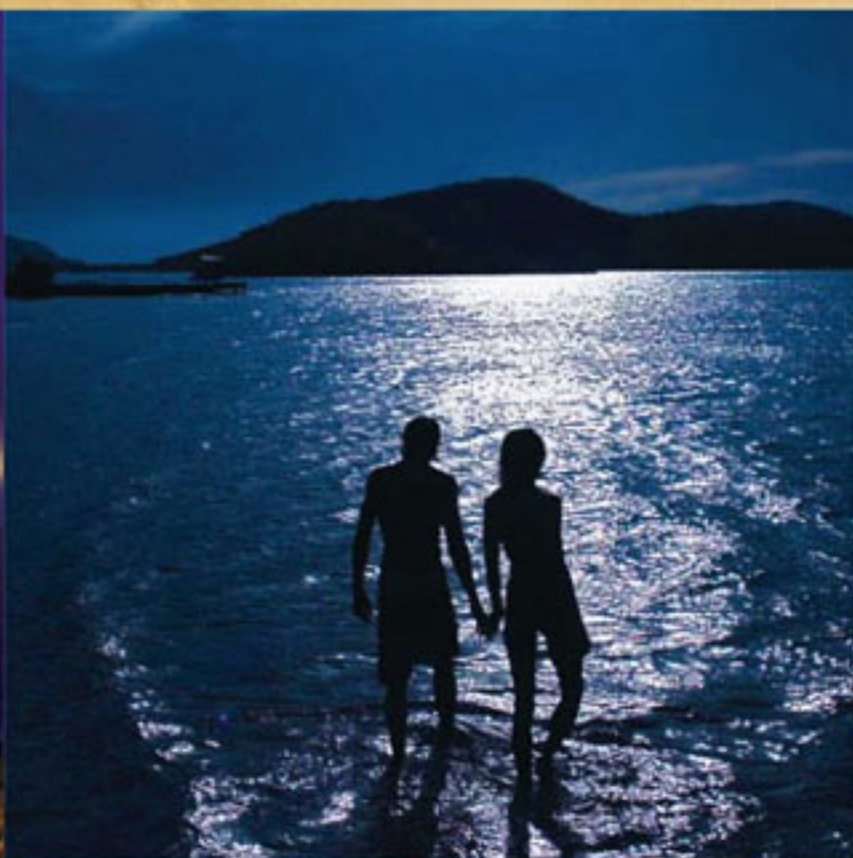
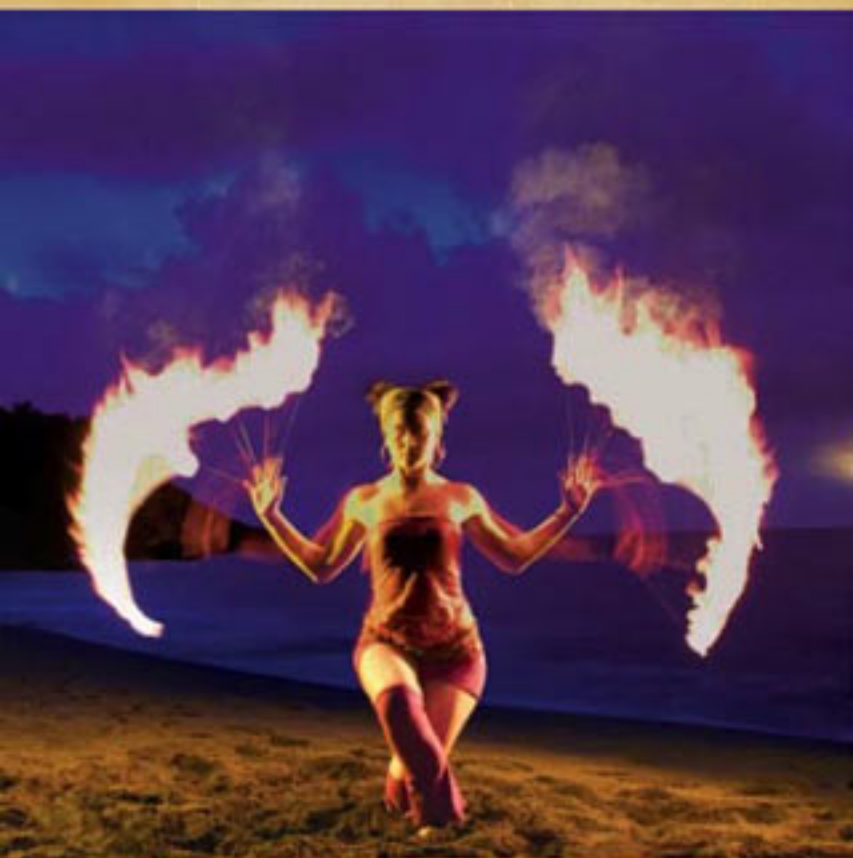




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# SALMON'S





# JOURNEY

*Each summer, they rush upriver with remarkable urgency—schools of indomitable salmon, leaping skyward in glistening arcs of silver as they return from the ocean depths to their freshwater birthplace to spawn. For centuries, North American fishermen and cooks have eagerly awaited this annual spring pilgrimage; it signals a return to a season of abundance and vitality in the kitchen. From native American methods for preserving the fish to recipes brought here by immigrants to new dishes dreamed up by American chefs that have worked their way into our culinary canon, salmon has earned a revered place at the American table. And, while the fish has become a supermarket staple, in most parts of the world over recent decades, the story of salmon has become as much one of survival as one of abundance. Herein, we celebrate two notable groups—a small league of fishermen who hand-harvest Alaskan salmon using traditional methods, and pioneers of sustainable aquaculture—who have become champions of some of the most exquisite-tasting salmon in the world.*

*photographs by* ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI *and* NATALIE FOBES







## SALMON

[PART ONE]

## KING OF FISH

A growing appetite for wild salmon may be saving a North American fishing tradition *by* MOLLY O'NEILL

**T**HE YUKON-KUSKOKWIM Delta is a chin of land that juts out from the southwestern coast of Alaska into the Bering Sea. It's a marshy expanse of flat, treeless tundra, about the size of Oregon, etched by sloughs and ponds, most of which are frozen eight months of the year. The delta, where the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers meet and empty into the ocean, seems to stretch past the end of the Earth: a bald, roadless, and, when the ice recedes, squishy equivocation where water and earth seem to change places regularly.

About 20,000 Yupik Eskimos live in a handful of villages scattered across this landscape—Kotlik, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Mountain Village, Alakanuk, and Grayling, to name a few. Among the indigenous peoples of North America, the Yupik constitute the largest group to have remained, without interruption, on their native land. For most of their existence, the mainstay of their diet has been the meaty fish known as the Yukon king salmon, which, during the summer spawning season, surges roughly 2,000 miles up the biggest, baddest salmon river in the world. To the immense surprise of the Yupik, their mighty Yukon king has recently become a gourmet gold mine, coveted by chefs who are paying astronomical prices to have the fish shipped on ice, like so many long-stemmed roses, to some of the top restaurants in the country.

The fish's sudden stardom is changing the way the Yupik catch, process, and market the fish to meet the high standards of the world's most demanding customers. And, in an era when farmed salmon outnumber wild salmon by 50 to one and wild stocks in the Atlantic have been reduced to a third of what they were 30 years ago, the fishing practices of a handful of native Alaskans are taking on a broad new significance in the story of North America's legendary wild salmon.

Roasted salmon steaks, facing page. Previous pages, a salmon leaps upstream in a Washington State river.

WILD SALMON IS AN epicurean dream: it's endlessly versatile, it's nearly impossible to overcook, and it boasts a rich, inimitable flavor that stands up well to many different kinds of seasonings or sauces. Though wild Atlantic salmon is no longer available in North American waters, there are still five viable wild varieties in the Pacific—chum, coho, pink, sockeye, and chinook, otherwise known as king—all of them harvested sometime between April and September (see "Know Your Salmon", page 77). Farmed salmon can taste great, but it simply cannot compare with the wild stuff, caught when the fish is surfacing from the ocean and commencing its fated run upstream to spawn. At that moment, its flesh is dense and thickly ribbed with pearly, white fat that lubricates the flesh as it cooks. (The Yukon king, which swims in some of Alaska's coldest waters, has a pronounced pocket of fat beneath the skin that looks like a thick, alabaster layer of thermal wear, and when it melts it causes the salmon's skin to crisp up like a potato chip.) In addition to its succulence, salmon traveling upstream has an extraordinarily complex flavor, briny and sweet from the ocean it left behind, with the mineral tones of the river.

Salmon, farmed or wild, is loved around the world. In Japan, where a species known as amago salmon flourishes, it is often prepared deep-fried or as sashimi. In Russia, salmon is

served in hearty soups or baked in pastry. And here in the States, salmon is truly a king among fishes, found on menus both simple and lavish and embraced by home cooks. But for all of salmon's gastronomic pleasures, the attention Americans lavish on wild salmon is a relatively new phenomenon. For centuries, salmon was so abundant in North America, particularly along the Pacific coast, that it was considered a humble commodity. It was salted and smoked by American Indians, canned, and frozen, but it was seldom cooked and eaten fresh; cookbooks from the 1930s through the 1950s, in fact, contain a bevy of recipes for everything from salmon croquettes to salmon loaf, all made with the canned fish. In New England, the Fourth of July was traditionally celebrated with the fish, alongside new potatoes, tender peas, and a sauce made with hard-boiled eggs. Yes, it was beloved, but it was simply too available, too inexpensive, too ingrained in our everyday lives to be chic.

The fish's social status rose a little in the 1960s, when America renewed its love affair with classic French cooking. Poaching a whole salmon represented a certain benchmark in the classic repertoire. Personally, I never understood the excitement: the dish was usually bland. Nonetheless, by the 1980s, poached salmon was vying with chicken cordon bleu at weddings and charity balls. In the 1990s, as restaurant cuisine lightened up, grilled and roasted salmon and salmon tartare became staples on restaurant menus, but it was increasingly likely that the fish placed before diners came from Atlantic aquaculture farms rather than from Pacific fishing grounds.

By the end of the 20th century, industrial pollution, river damming, and overfishing had

## METHOD

## Broiled Salmon Steaks with Tomatoes, Onions, and Tarragon

Heat oven to 450°. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and grease it with 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil. Cut 2 large yellow onions into 1/4"-thick rings; cut 4 medium tomatoes into 1/2" slices. Spread the onions and the tomatoes out on the baking sheet to form a bed for the salmon steaks. Tuck 16 smashed cloves garlic and 10 sprigs each of fresh thyme and oregano between vegetables and drizzle with 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil. Season the vegetables with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Roast the vegetables until soft and juicy, about 25 minutes. Remove the baking sheet from the oven. Arrange an oven rack 3" from the broiler element; turn oven to broil and heat. Arrange four 10-oz. salmon steaks on top of the roasted vegetables, drizzle with 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, and season with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Place 1 thin slice of lemon on each salmon steak and sprinkle 1/2 tbsp. roughly chopped fresh thyme and 1/2 tbsp. roughly chopped fresh oregano over the fish. Broil the salmon until lightly browned and just cooked through, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle the salmon steaks with 2 tbsp. fresh tarragon, 2 tbsp. Pernod or other anise-flavored liqueur, and 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil. Serves 4.



## SALMON

wreaked havoc on the nation's salmon stocks. Today, scientists estimate that the North American wild salmon population has dropped from 1.5 million to fewer than half a million over the past three decades. Intensifying this predicament are the effects of climate change, which many oceanographers blame for the fact that annual salmon runs have become less predictable. This year, along the coast of California, the kings didn't return home to their natal rivers to spawn, and officials closed salmon fishing operations up and down the West Coast. Only Alaska's king salmon fisheries, which are now heralded as the healthiest fisheries in the world, remained open. And the old-fashioned, hand-harvesting methods used by the Yupik are setting new standards.

UNTIL FIVE YEARS AGO, few people outside the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta had tasted fresh king salmon harvested from the region. The Yupik themselves, many of whom worked at the fish processing plants that have operated across

the delta for decades, rarely indulged in the fresh fish. Salmon was the center of their subsistence diet; they cured it, smoked it, and dried it to create a sort of jerky, which they ate year-round. In the summer of 1999, however, a near-disaster changed the way the Yupik thought about their salmon. For the first time ever, to the bafflement of conservationists and fisheries experts and in a foreshadowing of what happened recently in California, the fish did not return to the Yukon. When the same thing happened the following year, eight of the delta's 12 fish processing plants closed shop and hundreds of Yupik were put out of work. Around the same time, prices for everything from fuel to groceries spiked dramatically. People started leaving to take jobs in Bethel, the delta's regional hub, or in Anchorage, 500 miles to the east.

"We were watching our world end," Humphrey Keyes, a 51-year-old Yupik fisherman, told me when I first met him, a couple of years ago. "We had to figure out a way to earn cash."

Keyes, his wife, Ellen, and I were sitting in,

of all places, a Boston restaurant called Hamersley's Bistro. The two of them had flown from Alaska to New England to introduce Yukon king salmon to wholesalers, grocers, chefs, and journalists at the Boston Seafood Show. "It's the foie gras of the fish world," said Gordon Hamersley, the chef and owner of the restaurant where we were dining. "So rich and so satiny."

During the dinner, a tasting menu that consisted of multiple courses featuring Yukon king, the Keyeses explained how, in 2002, the fish came back. *(continued on page 78)*

## RECIPE

## Salmon à la Nage

SERVES 4

Elegant and surprisingly easy to prepare, the salmon in this dish is immersed in a buttery, wine-and-mussel-infused broth. (*Nage* is the French word for swim.)

- 6 stalks asparagus (about 3 oz.)
- 9 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 large shallot, finely chopped
- 4 6-oz. skinless boneless salmon filets
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 24 mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- 1½ cups white wine
- ½ cup fresh or frozen peas
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh tarragon
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh chives
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- ½ tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill

**1.** Heat oven to 225°. Snap off and discard ends from asparagus. Thinly slice stalks on the bias; leave tips intact. Set aside. Grease a 10" straight-sided skillet with 1 tbsp. butter. Sprinkle skillet with shallots. Season filets with salt and pepper; arrange in skillet. Scatter mussels around filets; pour in wine with 1½ cups water. Boil, and reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, covered, until mussels open, 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat; set aside, covered, to let steam, until fish is just cooked through, 3-4 minutes. Using a spatula, transfer fish to a baking sheet; transfer mussels with a slotted spoon to sheet, leaving broth in skillet. Keep fish and mussels warm in oven.

**2.** Place skillet over high heat; bring broth to a boil. Whisk in remaining butter, 1 tbsp. at a time, until smooth. Add asparagus and peas; cook until tender, 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in tarragon, chives, parsley, and dill. Season with salt and pepper. Divide fish and mussels among 4 bowls; divide broth between them.

A fisherman kisses the first catch of the season for good luck, below. Facing page, salmon à la nage.











Lot 77210  
no/au  
1595  
sfhoy  
-107

1

2

3

Lot 77212  
COHO no/au  
wt. 8.30 lbs

77213  
no/au  
Pinks  
wt. 3.50 lbs



## KNOW YOUR SALMON

Different varieties of salmon vary substantially in taste and texture, but they all share one cardinal trait: a high fat content, which gives their flesh a rich flavor and lush texture. All wild salmon taste their best when caught just before their journey home to freshwater spawning grounds, since they prepare for the trip by fattening up on ocean crustaceans. Featured here are the six varieties available in the United States. Also known as chinook salmon, the mighty king **1** can weigh well over a hundred pounds; its habitat ranges from California to Alaska. The meaty fish has a pure flavor and ample fat and cooks beautifully over a charcoal fire. The coho salmon **2**, also called silver salmon, constitutes just 10 percent of the commercial salmon fishery in the United States. Making its home in the waters from Oregon to Alaska and available in markets from late summer through fall, the fish has a firm texture and a rich, gamy flavor suited to simple preparations like poaching. Pink salmon **3**, also called humpback salmon, is the smallest variety available in this country, averaging only five pounds; the most abundant, it's often canned. Lower in fat, the delicate, sweet flesh of pink salmon has a subtle flavor best brought out by pan-frying or whole-roasting. Sometimes known as leaper salmon, the Atlantic salmon **4** once flourished in North Atlantic waters, but overfishing, pollution, and a host of other factors have decimated wild stocks. Demand for this fatty, full-flavored salmon, probably the most versatile variety when it comes to cooking, is met mostly by fish farms, which now produce more than half of all the salmon sold in this country. The flesh of the red, or sockeye, salmon **5**, a variety of Pacific salmon whose range stretches from British Columbia to Alaska and which is the second-fattiest type, has a distinctive, deep orange-red color and is dense and full-flavored. Sockeye, which first comes to market in May, is usually the variety favored for raw preparations. The abundant and relatively neutral-tasting chum salmon **6**, sometimes called keta salmon, is second only to the king in size and inhabits waters throughout the Pacific Northwest; chum salmon is harvested in the late fall and is most often canned, smoked, or cured. —Hunter Lewis and Ben Mims





## S A L M O N

(continued from page 74) Around that same time, Yupik fishermen started hearing about the enormous popularity of Copper River king salmon, which swims in a relatively short river roughly 500 miles to the southeast of the delta. The fish from that river were fetching up to \$15 a pound wholesale—a staggering sum at the time—in places like New York and Seattle. In fact, since 1997, when Copper River salmon was first established as a brand by a consortium of fishermen and businesspeople and marketed to luxury restaurants in the lower 48, the average household income of those fishermen had doubled.

The Yupik were confounded by the celebrity of Copper River salmon. “A salmon like a Yukon king that is ready to swim 2,000 miles upriver is bigger, richer, firmer, and fatter and tastes better than a salmon making a 300-mile run,” said Humphrey. “We started to think, Why not us?” The idea of branding a particular salmon from a particular river made plenty of sense: the flavor of salmon varies depending on where the fish live and what they’re eating. (See “Salmon Superhighways,” page 80.)

So, in 2002, a group of 300 Yupik fishermen and their families, including the Keyeses, formed a cooperative to develop their own Yukon king salmon processing plant and marketing operation. Their aim was to get the fish from the ocean to restaurant kitchens and gourmet markets in as fresh a condition as possible. The company they started, Kwik’Pak Fisheries, bases its operations in the village of Emmonak, a short skiff ride from what could be called the world’s premier salmon fishing grounds: the tidal waters that stretch for a few miles from the mouth of the river, where the fish surface from the ocean before surging up the Yukon.

Thanks to Kwik’Pak, a Yukon king salmon caught outside Emmonak on a Thursday can be served Saturday night at Nobu in New York City—for a price. To the Yupik, “the price of salmon” signifies how much a buyer will pay them for their fish, but it also describes the incalculable value of a fish that has always sustained their people and organized their days. “Saying ‘That’s the price of salmon’ is like saying ‘That’s life,’” Ellen Keyes told me during that dinner. “If I needed a new dress and we couldn’t afford the fabric, my mother would blame the price of salmon. If my children complain about having to go to our salmon camp to fish in June, I tell them, ‘Sorry, that’s the price of salmon.’”

The changes have been more than just rhetorical. For decades in the Yukon Delta,

the commercial fish processors had set the daily price of the fish they sold by studying the world supply and then projecting demand. Supported by both public and private investment, Kwik’Pak is charged with community support, not corporate profit. They pay the fishermen what they need to keep fishing and to continue the traditional Yupik life—roughly twice the average price of salmon sold worldwide. As a result, Kwik’Pak now supports 500

commercial fishing families, and, in the last five years, the average fishing income among those families has increased dramatically. What seemed like the end of the world nine years ago may have actually been a new beginning. “Our people are coming back home,” said Humphrey, smiling. But I wondered what sort of price the delivery of flawless fresh salmon was exacting on the traditional culture of the Yupik. Until this trip, Ellen told me, they had never been east of

## R E C I P E

## Slow-Cooked Salmon with Creamy Leeks and Red Wine Butter

SERVES 4

Gordon Hamersley, the chef and owner Hamersley’s Bistro in Boston, created this dish (pictured right) to showcase Alaskan Yukon king salmon, which is the fattiest of all the Pacific salmon. Gently roasting the salmon at a low temperature allows its fat to melt slowly and baste the flesh, yielding a luscious, ultratender piece of fish.

- 1 cup red wine
- 2 shallots (1 roughly chopped, 1 finely chopped)
- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter (6 tbsp. softened, 2 tbsp. diced)
- 2 tsp. chopped flat-leaf parsley plus 1 tbsp. thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 medium leeks (white and light green parts only), julienned and washed
- 1/2 tbsp. finely chopped marjoram
- 1/2 tbsp. finely chopped thyme
- 1 tsp. crushed fennel seeds
- 1/3 cup dry vermouth
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 4 8-oz. skinless boneless salmon filets
- 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped

**1.** Combine red wine and roughly chopped shallots in a 1-quart saucepan; bring to a boil over high heat. Boil until reduced to 1 tbsp., about 13 minutes. Strain the wine through a fine sieve into a bowl; discard shallots. Let wine cool. Add softened butter and chopped parsley and season with salt and pepper. Stir with a fork until well combined. Transfer red wine butter to a sheet of plastic wrap and roll tightly into a 1"-thick cylinder about 5" long. Twist ends of plastic wrap to seal tightly. Chill until firm. (The red wine butter may be made and refrigerated up to 1 week in advance.)

**2.** Heat remaining butter in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add the leeks, marjoram, thyme, and fennel, season with salt, and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly wilted, about 2 minutes. Add the vermouth and cook, stirring occasionally, until almost all the liquid has evaporated, about 8 minutes. Add the cream and lemon juice and cook, stirring occasionally, until the leeks are soft and the cream has thickened, about 25 minutes. (Add a little water if leeks become dry.) Season with salt and pepper. Keep leeks warm, covered, over low heat.

**3.** Heat oven to 275°. Arrange the salmon on a foil-lined baking sheet. In a small bowl, combine the remaining shallots, olive oil, and garlic. Rub salmon with the shallot mixture and season with salt and pepper. Roast the salmon until medium rare, about 12 minutes. Cut four 1/4"-thick slices of the red wine butter, place 1 on top of each filet, and let melt slightly in the oven, about 3 minutes.

**4.** To serve, spoon some of the leeks onto the center of 4 plates. Using a spatula, place a salmon filet atop each. Garnish with remaining parsley.







## SALMON

California. They had never tasted their salmon prepared six ways by a four-star chef. I watched them study each course that arrived with the careful fascination of an anthropologist. Ellen explained that when they prepare fresh salmon, it is usually in simple soups and stews. She was awed by the slow-roasted Hamersley's version, which was enriched with red wine and butter. The tart wine, she said, made the fish "taste like salmon, but more".

THE SUMMER AFTER I'd met the Keyeses in Boston, I accepted an invitation to visit them in Emmonak. I was curious to see how the appetite of modern urbanites was affecting Yupik culture, and, of course, I was eager to taste the fish in its context. It was late July when I arrived. The town—a collection of about 200 plywood houses, a general store, a few municipal buildings, and a pool hall—is not a picturesque fishing village. The

air smelled like dirt, ocean, and the exhaust from the all-terrain vehicles that supply the primary mode of transportation in town during the summer.

Yukon kings move upriver in "surges" over a period of about three weeks between early July and early August; two surges had already taken place in the weeks prior to my arrival. The spring mud had dried, and the four-wheelers bounced along the narrow main street, sending up clouds of concrete-colored dust. Everyone was waiting for the third salmon surge.

On my first full day in Emmonak, I joined Ellen Keyes as she set out to join her husband at their fish camp, five miles from town. "Not many out there," she shouted over the roar of the motor on her 24-foot-long, flat-bottomed aluminum boat as we zoomed up a channel that would take us from the village to the famed fishing grounds. Dressed in a drop-waist gingham tunic and mirrored sunglasses, she explained

that many Yupik fishermen no longer used the traditional wooden skiffs. Like her, they were using new aluminum models to carry the salmon destined for restaurant plates; the fish must be laid on crushed ice in the boat, gently ferried back to shore, and flown out from an airstrip in town within two hours of being caught.

The mechanics of how the Yupik fish haven't changed much, she said; they still work in husband-and-wife teams, using either stationary or floating nets that stretch between boats. Nowadays, however, instead of moving to their camps so that they may live and work together with their families during salmon season, as most Yupik fishermen used to do, many have begun to commute from their villages to fish every day. She said that her young sons were at the camp with them this week but that their two teenage daughters stayed behind. "They say there is nothing to do out here," Ellen told me, as the boat skipped over the waves. "No Internet, no cell reception."

Ellen eased back on the throttle as she drew close to her husband's boat. The salmon were meandering, not running, Humphrey said. In half an hour, only a dozen or so fat, silvery kings had lodged in the net. The couple hauled in their gear and sped back to camp. I watched the Keyeses use two-handled, crescent-shaped knives to clean, scale, and cut salmon on a wooden plank. The couple worked together efficiently, wordlessly. While Humphrey hung the salmon strips over the rafters of the drying pavilion, Ellen built a cook fire. She heated big river rocks in the coals, removed the stones from the fire, and laid lightly salted salmon filets atop them. I assumed that her technique—an ingenious form of slow, low-heat cooking—reached back a few thousand years. No, said Ellen, as she transferred a filet to a tin plate and passed it to me along with a fork. She'd learned the method from a chef in Seattle. My imagination—which needed to believe in the romance of the past in order to fully appreciate the present—was deeply chagrined. As we crowded by the fire, eating a salmon that was indeed the sum of all salmon I'd ever known, I couldn't help thinking about the price of salmon.

MOLLY O'NEILL is the author of the New York Cookbook (Workman Publishing, 1992), among other books. Her most recent article in SAVEUR was "Butter: A Love Story" (March 2008).

## SALMON SUPERHIGHWAYS



Salmon are anadromous, meaning they are born in freshwater, venture into the sea and remain there for a few years, and return to their birthplace to reproduce. Different waterways along North America's West Coast attract different species of Pacific salmon, and some attract multiple species, creating bustling piscine arteries during spawning season. The Sacramento River 12, the Columbia River 7, and the Yukon River 1 host the majority of the country's king salmon. The range of the coho salmon extends from Monterey Bay 13, on California's central coast, to Oregon's Umpqua River 11 and Point Hope in northwest Alaska. Chum salmon can be found from the Tillamook Bay 10 in Oregon to deep into the Mackenzie River 4 in Canada's arctic Northwest Territories. Washington's Puget Sound 8, known for pink salmon, is also a key haven for sockeye salmon, which is also located in the Fraser River basin 6 in British Columbia and Bristol Bay 2 in Alaska. Other rivers, such as the Skeena 5 and the Willapa 9, host prime salmon runs, too. "They just haven't been touted as well as the Yukon and Copper 3," says John Hilsinger, director of the Division of Commercial Fisheries at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. A salmon's flavor, he notes, is affected by the food available in the river where it spends its early life and by that river's length (the longer the river, the more flavorful fat a fish puts on to prepare for the spawning journey), which explains why so many cooks are interested in a salmon's provenance.—Ben Mims



## SALMON

## HOW TO FILET A SALMON

It's easy, and worthwhile, to filet your own salmon: not only is doing so far more economical than buying presliced filets, but the practice gives you access to all the tasty, overlooked parts of the fish, such as the belly, head, and collars. (For more about salmon parts, see page 91.) Rinse a scaled and gutted salmon under cold water, pat dry with a kitchen towel, and transfer to a large cutting board with the belly facing you. **1** Working with a long, flexible knife, make a diagonal cut behind the gills downward until the backbone stops the blade. **2** Work the knife under the filet. Keep the blade flush against the backbone and parallel to the cutting board. In long, fluid strokes, slice toward the tail to gently release the filet from the body of the salmon. Turn the fish over and repeat with the second filet. **3** Remove the thin ribs, also known as the belly bones, by slicing underneath them toward the tapered end of the filet. **4** Trim off some of the belly 1-2 inches in from the edge to make a more uniform filet, reserving belly for another use. **5** Drape the filet over the top of an inverted bowl so that the pin bones protrude slightly. Run a fingertip lengthwise down the filet to locate the pin bones. Remove the bones with tweezers or fish pliers. **6** To remove the skin, carefully cut through tail end of fish, edging knife between skin and filet. Holding the knife blade firmly in place at a 20-degree angle to the cutting board, grip the tail end of skin with a kitchen towel in your other hand and pull skin taut in a side-to-side motion away from filet, letting the knife do the work. **7** Cleanly slice the filets into 2"-4"-wide portions. —Hunter Lewis







A Yupik boy in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.  
Facing page, Russian salmon soup.







## SALMON

[PART TWO]

## FRIENDLY WATERS

Thanks to a few pioneers, salmon aquaculture is evolving toward sustainability *by* NANCY HARMON JENKINS

**T**HE LAST TIME I ATE wild Atlantic salmon was in the spring of 1991 in the northern Spanish city of Pamplona. It was a center cut, gently roasted and served with a piquant sauce of minced herbs, capers, and olive oil that contrasted brightly, in color and flavor, with the salmon's fresh pink hue and rich taste. "But is it really wild?" I asked. The dining-room manager assured me it was. Later the chef herself came out of the kitchen bearing a ticket that had been attached to the fish. In Spanish it read, "Salmon #134 from the Bidasoa River"; that's the boundary river between Spain and France.

These days, fish lovers and environmentalists alike know that Atlantic salmon is endangered; its decline, especially in the past hundred years, has been precipitous and shocking. Owing to over-

fishing, loss of spawning habitat, pollution, and other factors, wild Atlantic salmon populations are less than half of what they were just 20 years ago and only a quarter of what they were before the 19th century. A few countries in the North Atlantic, including Iceland and Ireland, continue to support sport fisheries and even a very small amount of commercial fishing in local waters, but in most parts of the world, if you want to eat Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*, an entirely different genus and species from *Oncorhynchus*, or Pacific salmon), it must be farmed.

Many environmentalists insist that salmon aquaculture is downright dangerous. Large-

Salmon tartare on potato crisps, below. Facing page, a salmon farm in New Zealand.



## RECIPE

## Ukha

(Russian Salmon Soup)

SERVES 6

Salmon has been a pillar of Russian cuisine for centuries. In lean times, all parts of the fish went into the soup, say Glenn R. Mack and Asele Surina in their book *Food Culture in Russia and Central Asia* (Greenwood, 2005). But in "more prosperous times [they] were strained out to make a clear broth". This recipe is based on one in *Please to the Table* by Anya von Bremzen and John Welchman (Workman, 1990).

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 small carrots (1 chopped, 3 thinly sliced)
- 8 black peppercorns
- 4 sprigs flat-leaf parsley
- 4 sprigs dill
- 2 leeks (white parts only), thickly sliced crosswise and washed
- 2 ribs celery, roughly chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 1/2 cups white wine
- 1 lb. fish bones, such as snapper, rinsed
- 1 salmon head (about 1 lb.), gills removed
- 3 medium yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/4" chunks
- 1 lb. skinless boneless salmon filet, cut into 1" cubes
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal

**1.** Heat the olive oil in a 6-quart pot over medium-high heat. Add chopped carrots, peppercorns, parsley, dill, leeks, celery, bay leaves, and pepper flakes and cook until vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes. Add 6 cups water, wine, snapper bones, and salmon head and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, skimming off any froth that rises to the surface, for 35 minutes. Strain the broth through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl. Discard the solids.

**2.** Wipe out the pot and add the broth along with the remaining carrots and potatoes. Bring to a boil, covered, over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, until potatoes and carrots are tender, about 25 minutes.

**3.** Add salmon to soup; simmer until just cooked through, about 5 minutes. Add lemon juice and season generously with salt and pepper. Divide soup between bowls; garnish with the scallions.







## SALMON

scale farming, they say, pollutes surrounding waters and contaminates the wild stock because of interbreeding with escaped fish. There are also concerns about farmed fish containing antibiotics and chemicals that are hazardous to humans. Is all this alarm justified? After reading countless scientific reports, talking with fisheries experts, and visiting numerous

**W** *A recipe for miso-marinated salmon and a story about white salmon at [SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112](http://SAVEUR.COM/ISSUE112)*

aqua-  
culture  
opera-  
tions, I've

learned that although there is indeed good reason for concern about salmon farming (a virus that caused anemia that recently spread across overcrowded salmon farms in Chile is a case in point), there is also a growing, if inchoate, movement toward farming salmon responsibly. And, considering the health-related appeal of the fish (salmon is a key source of beneficial omega-3 fatty acids), Americans have some cause for optimism about the prospects of sustainable aquaculture.

Retailers, like Whole Foods Market, that specialize in environmentally friendly foods agree. That company has established protocols for the farmed salmon it buys, including a ban on the use of antibiotics, hormones, and parasiticides, according to Carrie Brownstein, the company's seafood-quality-standards coordinator. "We're also working with our producers to reduce the pressure on wild populations used for salmon feed," she said. (She mentioned the use of trimmings from fish processing, instead of whole fish, to produce fish oils and pellets.)

**SALMON FARMING** AS WE know it today developed in Norway with Atlantic salmon in the 1970s. Nowadays, 95 percent of all farmed salmon is Atlantic salmon, and while the majority sold in the U.S. comes from farms in Chile, there are also salmon farms in Northern Europe, Canada, the Pacific Northwest, New England, and a few other places, including New Zealand. In recent years, I've encountered a few that are taking steps toward sustainability, like Cooke Aquaculture, at its farms in Maine. Maine's strict environmental policies play a part: they forbid the use of hormones and severely restrict the use of antibiotics to supervised veterinary uses. Maine requires salmon farmers to adopt such land-farming techniques as site rotation and fallowing (allowing a site to revert to its natural state

for a period after harvest).

One of the more progressive salmon farms I've visited is operated by Loch Duart Ltd., in the northwest of Scotland. Salmon were kept in large net cages that were secured to the sea bottom. The fish had plenty of space and were darting about freely. (That counteracts the mistaken belief that the high fat content of Atlantic salmon is the result of the fish's limited mobility in overcrowded pens.) Loch Duart's operation comprises a series of farm sites located in and around Badcall Bay, north of the Scottish city of Inverness, and another in the Western Isles.

## METHOD


**Salmon Tartare on Potato Crisps**

This recipe for creamy and piquant salmon tartare (shown on page 84) comes from Jeremy Marshall, the owner of New York's Aquagrill restaurant. The ingredients include a combination of capers, red onion, and dijon mustard, which give the dish an assertive kick. Heat oven to 300°. Peel one 8"-long russet potato. Using a Japanese mandoline (see page 97), slice potato lengthwise into twenty-five 1/16"-thick slices, stacking them to prevent from drying out. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper; rub each with 2 tbsp. canola oil. Arrange potato slices on baking sheets, spacing them apart, and turn them in the oil to coat. Lightly sprinkle with kosher salt and bake, rotating sheets and flipping potato slices every 5 minutes, until crisp and browned, 40–50 minutes. (Some will brown faster than others.) Transfer potato crisps to a paper towel-lined plate. Dab dry with a paper towel; set aside. Cut 1 lb. skinless boneless salmon filet or belly into 1/8" cubes. Transfer to a bowl and add 3 tbsp. dijon mustard, 2 tbsp. chopped cornichons, 2 tbsp. chopped red onions, 2 tbsp. rinsed and drained capers, and 2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil and season with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste. Fold in 2 tbsp. finely chopped flat-leaf parsley and 1 tbsp. finely chopped chives. Chill for 30 minutes. Serve tartare on potato crisps garnished with chopped chives. Serves 6–8

Nick Joy, a founder and the managing director of the company, told me that his company uses no antibiotics or growth hormones; it doesn't overpopulate, and it allows each site to lie fallow every third year. Strong tidal currents sweep through twice every 24 hours, but the business has also introduced sea urchins and seaweeds to help keep the water clean, and they have replaced their nets every two cycles to minimize the number of escapees. These practices represent a significant step toward reducing aquaculture's environmen-

tal impact and inherent riskiness, and people are starting to notice: Loch Duart has won several awards in the UK, not only for its sustainable aquaculture practices but also for the quality of the fish itself, which has a buttery texture and sweetly meaty flavor.


Some factors affecting the health of farmed salmon and the people who eat it are, even in the best of circumstances, harder to control and assess. A report published in the journal *Science* in 2004 concluded that farmed salmon had higher contents of potent carcinogens, like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and dioxins, than wild Pacific salmon. But PCBs and dioxins are distressingly common throughout the environment, including in dairy products, meat, and other fish. A study conducted at the Harvard School of Public Health concluded that the levels of these carcinogens in all fish, farmed or wild, are offset by the benefits of fish eating. Then there's astaxanthin, a compound added to salmon feed to give the fish's flesh a more distinctive pink color. Additive-averse consumers regularly raise concerns about it, but astaxanthin is a natural carotenoid pigment present in the diet of wild salmon and is widely available in health food stores as a nutritional supplement for human consumption. (The version used by most farmers is a synthetic one, and while the EU and Canada restrict the amount that may be added to salmon feed because of concerns about potential long-term health risks, synthetic astaxanthin is widely accepted as identical to the natural variety.)

As responsible aquaculture gains ground, the greatest challenge for the salmon farmers who practice it may lie in getting the word out. Their task is further complicated by confusing labeling, especially the designation "organic", which, at least for fish products, is not tied to any particular set of production standards in the United States. It makes sense for salmon farmers to follow the lead of land-based farmers who are setting their own standards and marketing products under their own brand names; Niman Ranch, the Alameda, California-based purveyor of sustainably raised pork, lamb, and beef, is one of the most successful. In the future, shoppers will probably see a lot more branded salmon at their local fish market. That would be all to the good, for the fish, for the environment, and for cooks. 

**THE PANTRY**, page 97: *Sources for Yukon River king salmon, farmed Atlantic salmon from Loch Duart, and other varieties.*

NANCY HARMON JENKINS's most recent article for *SAVEUR* was "City of Ragu" (April, 2008).





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# DEEP INSPIRATION

A LIFETIME OF SCUBA DIVING HAS INFLUENCED ONE CHEF'S STYLE

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When most people think of culinary travel, they think of gourmet hot spots like Paris, New York, and Rome, but for chef Brandon McGlamery it was scuba diving that led to the discovery of new and exotic cuisines. When he was growing up, McGlamery and his family would head down to the Florida Keys every summer to indulge in the tropical lifestyle of sun, sand, and sea. The most important of these to Brandon was the sea. He developed a passion for the water early and spent most of his waking hours wet and happy, scuba diving, snorkeling, and boating. In Florida, surrounded not just by the ocean but also by classic dishes like conch chowder and key lime pie, McGlamery developed a passion for cuisine,



LEFT: Chef Brandon McGlamery; TOP: gearing up for a dive off Montauk, New York; BOTTOM: Wagyu beef carpaccio with hearts of palm salad and curry aioli; RIGHT: diving Temple Rock, northern Red Sea.

which steered him to becoming a chef.

McGlamery's culinary path has taken him through some of the best kitchens in the country—he's worked with Thomas Keller at the French Laundry and Anne Quatrano at Bacchanalia—but the deep

and the restaurant scenes and local foods of Australia, Latin America, Asia, and the African coast. Now the head chef at the renowned LUMA restaurant in Winter Park, Florida, McGlamery weaves all of his influences into unforgettable epicurean experi-



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memory of Florida's waters and his infatuation with the ocean continues to guide his cooking. Not surprisingly, he often chooses travel destinations with an eye not just on their culinary options but also on their proximity to oceans and scuba diving opportunities, and this focus has led him to explore the oceans

ences, and his love of the sea has caused him to make sure that his menus and recipes revolve around sustainable food sources. "When you've had the chance to dive on a coral reef and to see marine life in its natural habitat, you quickly realize the need to be responsible in your kitchen," he explains.

## Brandon's Culinary Hot List

**AUSTRALIA** "Australia is one the hottest food hubs in the world. Chefs are known for their fusion foods, and to have the chance to dive the mecca that is the Great Barrier Reef, with its rich pageant of color, clownfish, and movement, and celebrate each day with an unforgettable food experience...that would be like a week of Christmas mornings for me."

**BELIZE** "Sometimes you can be inspired by the simplest of things—fresh air, beautiful colors, sights and smells you can find nowhere else. And between the lush, primal rain forests, the world's second-longest barrier reef, and a unique local, authentic, and natural food experience, Belize inspires me even before I get on the plane."

**THAILAND** "Thailand obviously offers amazing food opportunities, especially for someone constantly on a quest for good traditional food. But there I'd also get to indulge my wish to dive with harmless whale sharks and the rich flavors and colors of a country exploding with exotic tastes and experiences."

**THE SEYCHELLES** Here is McGlamery's real secret passion. "The dream trip. Diving, fly fishing (catch and release only), and dining. The Seychelles is home to some amazing spice plantations and restaurants, like Le Jardin du Roi, which features dishes made up of local seafood, meat, homegrown fruit, and spices. It can't get better than that."





# SAVEUR COOKS

SAVEUR magazine invites you to share an evening of delicious classic recipes with friends. Classes are currently offered at select culinary schools throughout the country. Each class registration includes a one-year subscription (nine issues) to SAVEUR, an exclusive recipe booklet, and a SAVEUR gift bag filled with samples and coupons. Visit [www.saveurcooks.com](http://www.saveurcooks.com) for a complete list of participating schools.

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# IN THE SAVEUR KITCHEN

Discoveries, Tales, and Techniques from Our Favorite Room in the House. Edited by Todd Coleman



## Take All of Me

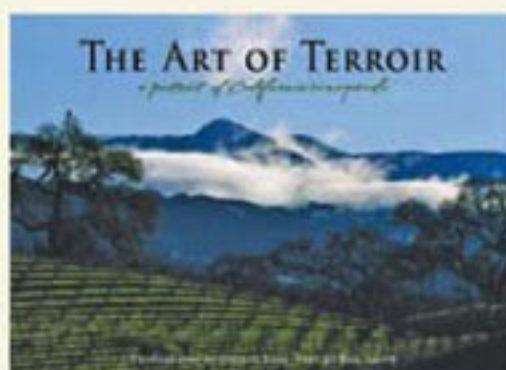
**S**ALMON, THAT MOST flavorful of fish, has much to give beyond just meaty filets and steaks. Take the salmon's belly **1**, for example, the strip of flesh that runs along the bottom of the filet and is usually cut away. It is the fattiest section of the fish and works well in salmon tartare (see page 86); it also takes well to grilling whole. The jewel-like, bright orange roe **2** of the salmon is also delicious, with a sweet-briny flavor that

makes it ideal for folding into scrambled eggs. (The roe from chum salmon, called ikura, is especially prized in Japan for its concentrated flavor.) Or consider the salmon's skin **3**; it contains more collagen than the flesh, so it crisps up nicely when fried or broiled. I like to crumble those salmon cracklings over a salad or use the skin for enriching stocks and soups. Because the muscles in the fish's tail **4** work so hard, its meat is especially succulent and fla-

vorful; think white meat versus dark. And don't forget the salmon's collar **5**, the ring of cartilage and flesh connecting the fish's head to its body. I like to put a few of them into a cast-iron skillet, add some olive oil, salt, and pepper, and slide the skillet into an oven or even nestle it directly in the coals of a charcoal fire. After a few minutes, the fish becomes a meltingly tender snack best chased with a cold beer. —Hunter Lewis



KENDALL JACKSON



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KITCHEN

# Lox Lessons

**A** SMALL SIGN HANGS behind the counter at Russ & Daughters, one of the last old-school emporiums of cured salmon and sundries on Manhattan's Lower East Side; it reads LOX ET VERITAS—salmon and truth. And that's exactly what I happened to be looking for on a recent visit to the store.

While I was working on the salmon articles in this issue (see "Miracle Cure", page 37, and "Salmon's Journey", page 70), it struck me as curious that, considering the groundswell of interest in both wild and farmed salmon these days, details about popular preserved varieties of the fish remain elusive. What are the differences between lox, nova, and plain old smoked salmon, anyway?

Niki Federman, the 30-year-old great-granddaughter of the store's founding father, Joel Russ (who started his business from a pushcart in 1911), warned me that the answer wasn't simple. "When people order lox," she told me, "I always ask, 'Are you sure?'" Nowadays, she continued, customers tend to use *lox* as a catchall term for any kind of cured or smoked salmon, but *lox* traditionally referred to Pacific varieties, usually king, cured in a very salty brine and not smoked. After the transcontinental railroad started delivering barrels of salted salmon from the Pacific coast to other parts of the country, in 1869, the food (which takes its name from *laks*, the Yiddish word for salmon) gained popularity in New York City, particularly among Eastern European Jewish immigrants who had brought with them to this country a love of cured and smoked fish.

In his book *New York Food* (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2004), Arthur Schwartz explains that many Jews at the time "lived in tenements with minimal cooking facilities. An already 'cooked' product like lox was akin to convenience food". Not only was it inexpensive, but, like all fish, it was pareve, meaning that, unlike meat, it could be eaten with dairy. Lox thus became a staple of "appetizing" stores that specialized in dairy and cured fish. By the 1930s, many smokehouses had opened in New York to preserve the fresh Pacific salmon arriving by refrigerated rail. Variations on lox emerged, the most popular being nova scotia—nova, or sometimes novy, for short—which differed from lox in that it was smoked and made with Atlantic salmon that came from fisheries in and around the Canadian province of Nova Scotia. As trade expanded over the course of the 20th century, big-city smokehouses in America also began replicating versions arriving





## KITCHEN



from places with their own smoked-salmon traditions, like Ireland, Scotland, and Denmark.

Perhaps one reason that consumers know so little about the details surrounding cured salmon is that the industry has never stopped evolving. According to Buzz Bilik, the director of sales and marketing for the Acme Smoked Fish Corporation, a fourth-generation family-owned company in Brooklyn, New York, that smokes fish for retailers, lox was historically defined as being made with Pacific fish but is now usually made with farm-raised Atlantic salmon. The formula isn't set in stone: though lox is traditionally unsmoked, Acme custom-smokes its for some retailers (like the vaunted Barney Greengrass, on Manhattan's Upper West Side). When I was on my fact-finding mission at Russ & Daughters, I asked José Reyes, a native of the Dominican Republic who has worked there for 32 years, about other ways the dish has changed over the decades. As he slapped a piece of lox on a wood cutting board, shiny from years of use, and began to slice it expertly with a long, thin blade, he shrugged. "Salmon are just like people," he said. "They change all the time." —Dana Bowen

## CURED WONDERS

Of the many varieties of cured salmon, here are ten of our favorites. **Norwegian smoked salmon** 1 glistens with fat and has a rich, piscine flavor that makes it a great all-purpose fish for tossing into pastas and layering on bagels. **Irish smoked salmon** 2 has an oystery earthiness and a not too oily texture. **Pastrami-style cured salmon** 3 is a relatively recent invention; it's smoked with a sweet, peppery spice rub. **Rich belly lox** 4, sometimes called salty lox, is made by a wet-curing process, in which the filets are submerged in brine and thus have a moist texture; cream cheese tempers its salinity. **Gravlax** 5 is dry-cured, so it has a firmer, more delicate texture. **Double-smoked Danish salmon** 6 has a pale color and a pleasantly charred flavor, a result of the additional smoking. **Scottish smoked salmon** 7 is dry-cured with salt and sugar and heavily smoked over oak or alder wood, so it has a smoky-sweet flavor. **Gaspé** 8, often called eastern nova, was traditionally made with fish from the Gaspé Bay in Québec, Canada; we love this wet-cured, smoked fish for its buttery texture and round, rich flavor. **Balik** 9, often called tsar-style salmon, is the most expensive; it's cut from the fat-striated loin of farmed fish and has a succulent texture. **Western nova** 10 is made by the same process as that used for gaspé, but with leaner, wild Pacific varieties. —D.B.

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Go west to San Sebastián and look for fresh colored scotch bonnets, yellow onions and green peppers. Indulge a huge steak or petite cherry tomatoes in Jayuya.

Get cilantro and our very own "recao", a long leaf relative, with a heavy herbal perfume from Arecibo's hydroponic farms. Add oregano, cumin, salt and a little crushed black pepper to spice it up.

The old way, chop everything, freeze or bottle. The new way, place in a blender. Bathe the mix with virgin olive oil. This is Puerto Rican Cookery 101. Use in thick stews, soups or rice dishes for that real Puerto Rican taste.

A wood carved mortar or "pilón" is a basic kitchen gadget. Then look for a typical "tostonera" to flatten your green plantain chips. Switch to black spotted, yellow skinned plantains for a sweeter taste. Find the newer version utensil, designed to have a half-moon concave wooden side, perfect to stuff the indented "tostón" as canapé base. Fry them. Get a small "anafre", a Taíno Indian grill to cook on forest picnic site. Start your fire. Grill native rabbit breast. Add exotic fruits to the mix. Enjoy!



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## KITCHEN

## Cool Beans

**T**HE CHEWY, ROBUSTLY flavored Asian legume known as the long bean truly lives up to its name. The beans, common ingredients in many Asian and Asian-inspired dishes, including the wok-charred long beans with black olives shown on page 28, can grow as long as a meter. In this country they're sometimes known as yard-long beans, which drives the point home nicely. Biting into one of the slender pods for the first time, I was astonished at how different it tasted from the green beans I'd grown up eating: it was dense and satisfying and surprisingly meaty.

*Vigna unguiculata sesquipedalis*, as the long bean is known to botanists, is a relative of Southern peas (which include black-eyed peas and cowpeas; see "Lovely Legumes", May 2008) and, like them, probably originated in Africa. While most Southern peas are harvested when they're fully mature and then shelled, the long bean is usually eaten young, pod and all. In Thailand, raw long beans (*tua fak yao*) are smashed with shredded green papaya in a mortar for *som tum*, a salad seasoned with fish sauce, lime juice, and chiles. In Singapore, they're the star of *kacang panjang belacan*, a citrusy dry braise of long beans with lemongrass, shrimp paste, ginger, and candlenuts.

Several different subvarieties of long bean exist. The thicker white long bean (near right) is sweet and succulent, and the porous walls of its pod readily absorb cooking flavors; it's great for slow-cooked soups and stews. The darker-colored green variety (far right) has a firmer, crisper texture, not unlike that of young asparagus, so it lends itself to quick-cooking methods like stir-frying and pan-sautéing.

Some supermarkets in the States are starting to carry long beans, which are grown in many parts of the U.S., but Asian groceries remain the best bet

for finding them (see *THE PANTRY*, page 97, for a mail-order source). Look for beans that are plump at the tips and have smooth, unblemished skin. "The ones that are ideal are soft and silky; you should be able to coil them," says *SAVEUR* contributing editor Andrea Nguyen, who buys long beans at farmers' markets near her Santa Cruz, California, home and recommends that they be used within a day or so after purchase. "When they get more mature, the beans inside get really fat and stretch the skin and start to look like Governor Schwarzenegger's arms." —Karen Shimizu



THIS PAGE: MICHAEL KRAUS; FACING PAGE: ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI



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## KITCHEN



## PERFECT PARTNER

THE SALT-AND-SUGAR-CURED salmon preparation known as gravlax (see “Miracle Cure”, page 37) is a cornerstone of Scandinavian cooking, especially in Sweden, where the thin-sliced delicacy is served with a tangy, refreshing mustard-dill sauce (called gravlaxsås in Swedish). As with many sacred food pairings, the origins are hard to determine; an encyclopedia of Swedish cuisine I consulted said the first known reference to the serving of gravlax with a mustard-dill sauce appeared in a letter written by a French diplomat, who reportedly tasted the two foods together—and emphatically disliked both—during a visit to the Swedish royal court in the 1640s. Whatever the circumstances of its birth, the pairing today is taken utterly for granted in Sweden. “It’s so embedded in our mind,” says Ulrika Bengtsson, who was the chef at the Swedish consulate in New York City for six years. “When you get gravlax, you look for the mustard sauce.” —*Hunter Lewis*

## METHOD

**Gravlaxsås**

(Mustard-Dill Sauce)

Whisk together 2 tbsp. dijon mustard, 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice, 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar, and 1 tsp. sugar in a medium bowl. While whisking, slowly drizzle in 5 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil until smooth. In a separate bowl, vigorously whisk 2 tbsp. heavy cream to stiff peaks. Gently fold the whipped cream and 1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh dill into the mustard sauce. Makes  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup.

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# THE PANTRY

## A Guide to Resources

*In producing the stories for this issue,  
we discovered food products and  
destinations too good to keep to ourselves.  
Please feel free to raid our pantry!*

BY HUNTER LEWIS

### Fare

When in Algeria, visit Sid Ali Lahlou's restaurant, **Dar Lahlou** (Palais des Expositions, Pins Maritimes, Algiers; 213/21-21-0807), to sample the couscous made by hand at his factory, Maison Lahlou. Jarred pitted **sour cherries** (P) (\$6.99 for a 24-ounce jar of ZerGüt brand cherries), for making the Hungarian chilled cherry soup, can be purchased from Kalustyan's (800/352-3451; www.kalustyans.com), which also carries **sour cherry juice** (P) (\$5.99 for a 35-ounce bottle; ask for sour cherry nectar). This dish can also be made with **freshing cherries** (\$25 for a 2-pound bag) or **fresh sour cherries** (\$35 for a 2-pound bag), which will be available from Melissa's/World Variety Produce (800/588-0151; www.melissas.com; prices may vary depending on availability) through July and June, respectively, or **frozen sweet cherries** (\$6.99 for a 10-ounce package), which are available from Diamond Organics (888/674-2642; www.diamondorganics.com). The Hugh Moore **Dixie Cup** Company Collection will be on view at the David Bishop Skillman Library of Lafayette College (710 Sullivan Road, Easton, Pennsylvania; 610/330-5151) from August 23 through December 31, 2008. When in southwestern Thailand, visit the **Maharat market** (Marharat Soi 9, Krabi), also known as the morning market, which is open from 4:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. daily. If you're traveling to Maputo, Mozambique, stop by Jorge Jordão's restaurant, Zambi (avenida 10 de Novembro #8; 258/82/432-8000), to try the piquant **piri-piri sauce**, or purchase **red fresno chiles** (P) (\$8.60 for a 1-pound bag) from Melissa's/World Variety Produce (see above) to make your own.

### Road Trip

To make Strongbow Inn's turkey noodle soup, ask your local butcher for **turkey wings**, or contact O. Ottomanelli's & Sons (212/675-4217). For the margaritas on page 52 we recommend **Herradura Silver Tequila** (\$46.99 for a 750-ml bottle), available at Park Avenue Liquor Store (212/685-2442) and at liquor stores throughout the U.S. To make the prickly pear margarita from Las Canarias in San Antonio, purchase **prickly pear fruits** (P) (\$16.75 for a box of ten; ask for cactus pears), available from Melissa's/World Variety Produce (800/588-1051; www.melissas.com). Purchase **finely ground white cornmeal** (P) (\$2.52 for a 5-pound bag), available from Atkinson Milling (800/948-5707; www.atkinsonmilling.com), to make Boone Tavern's spoonbread. Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks (212/989-8962; www.bonnieslotnickcookbooks.com) carries a variety of old and out-of-print books on food and cooking, including a rotating stock of Duncan Hines's **original guidebooks** from the *Adventures in Good Eating* series. Contact Slotnick directly for prices and availability.

### Japanese Knives

Korin Japanese Trading Corp. (212/587-7021; www.korin.com) sells a selection of knives made by Keiji Doi, including the Suisin Shiro-Hayate series and the Suisin Hayate series (\$700 to \$800 depending on size). The company also sells the knives pictured on page 64—the 8.2-inch **kamagata usuba** (\$416) made by Inox, the 7.6-inch **deba** (\$278) made by Korin Hon-kasumi, the 7.6-inch **usuba** (\$194) made by Masamoto Kasumi, the 11.7-inch **takobiki** (\$930) made by Aoko Suminagashi Sakimaru, and the 10.5-inch **yanagi** (\$700) made by Suisin Hayate—and a fine-grain **whetstone** (\$48; ask for a #6000 King Sharpening Stone) to keep the knives sharp. Korin also offers knife-sharpening and blade-repair services for all manner of Japanese-style knives.

### Salmon

To purchase **Yukon king salmon** harvested by Yupik fishermen (prices vary depending on seasonality and availability), contact Kwik'pak Fisheries (907/644-0326; www.kwikpakfisheries

.com). For the varieties of salmon listed on page 77, ask your local fishmonger or contact Fish Ex (888/926-3474; www.fishex.com) for fresh-frozen filets (prices vary depending on seasonality and availability) of **king salmon** (\$35 per pound), Yukon River **coho salmon** (\$14.95 per pound), and **pink salmon** (\$12.95 per pound). Atlantic salmon filets from Loch Duart (\$13.95 per pound) are available from Browne Trading Company (800/944-7848; www.brownetrading.com). Copper River **sockeye salmon** (\$19.95 per pound) and Yukon River **chum salmon** (\$16.95 per pound) are available from Fish Ex (see above). To make the potato crisps served with salmon tartare, use a **Japanese mandoline** (P), like the Benriner Mandoline (\$31.60; ask for the 3.6-inch-wide mandoline), available at Bridge Kitchenware (212/688-4220; www.bridgekitchenware.com).

### Kitchen

Contact Russ & Daughters (800/787-7229; www.russanddaughters.com) for **Norwegian smoked salmon** (\$24 per pound), **Irish smoked salmon** (\$34 per pound), **pastrami-style cured salmon** (\$30 per pound), **belly lox** (\$30 per pound), **gravlax** (\$30 per pound), **double-smoked Danish salmon** (\$48 per pound), **Scottish smoked salmon** (\$32 per pound), **gaspé** (\$30 per pound), **balik** (\$48 per pound), and **Western nova** (\$48 per pound). **Long beans** of both the thick, light green variety and the dark, crisp variety are readily available at Asian markets and can also be purchased from Melissa's/World Variety Produce (800/588-0151; www.melissas.com; price and availability vary by season; ask for Chinese long beans and white Chinese long beans).

### Correction

In our May 2008 issue, the recipe for crab spring rolls on page 98 should have called for 4 ounces of backfin crabmeat and 4 ounces of medium shrimp rather than for 4 pounds of each.

*Items marked with P also appear, with photographs, in our Visual Pantry at www.saveur.com/visualpantry112.*



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# the Table



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- Performance at Blackfriars Playhouse
- Relaxing massage at Breezy Hill Day Spa

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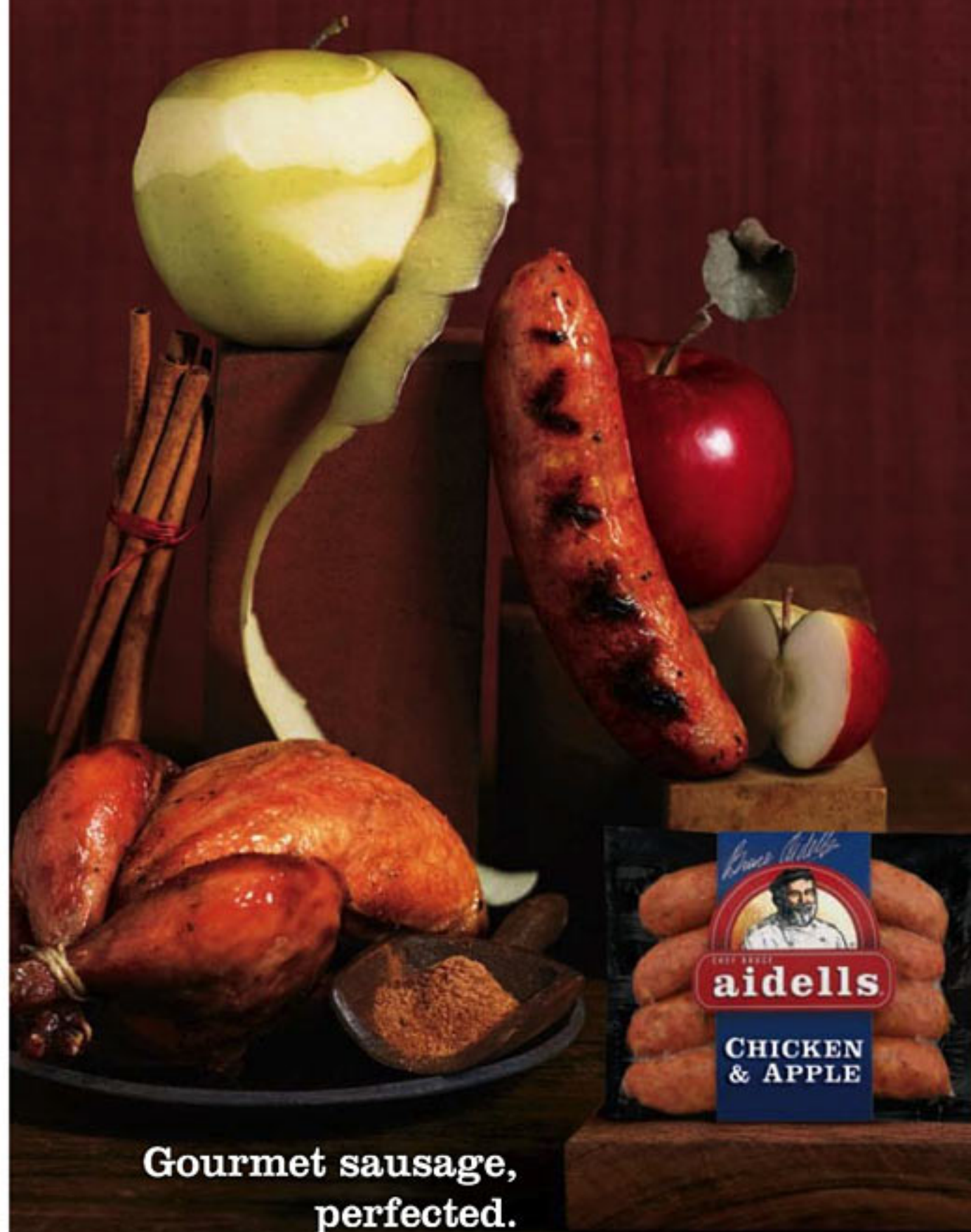
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# M O M E N T

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**TIME** 11:55 A.M., January 12, 2005

**PLACE** San Francisco

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*The last of the Doggie Diners—a Bay Area chain of hot dog stands—closed in 1986, but these mascots from their heyday live on.*

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PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC RISBERG/ASSOCIATED PRESS



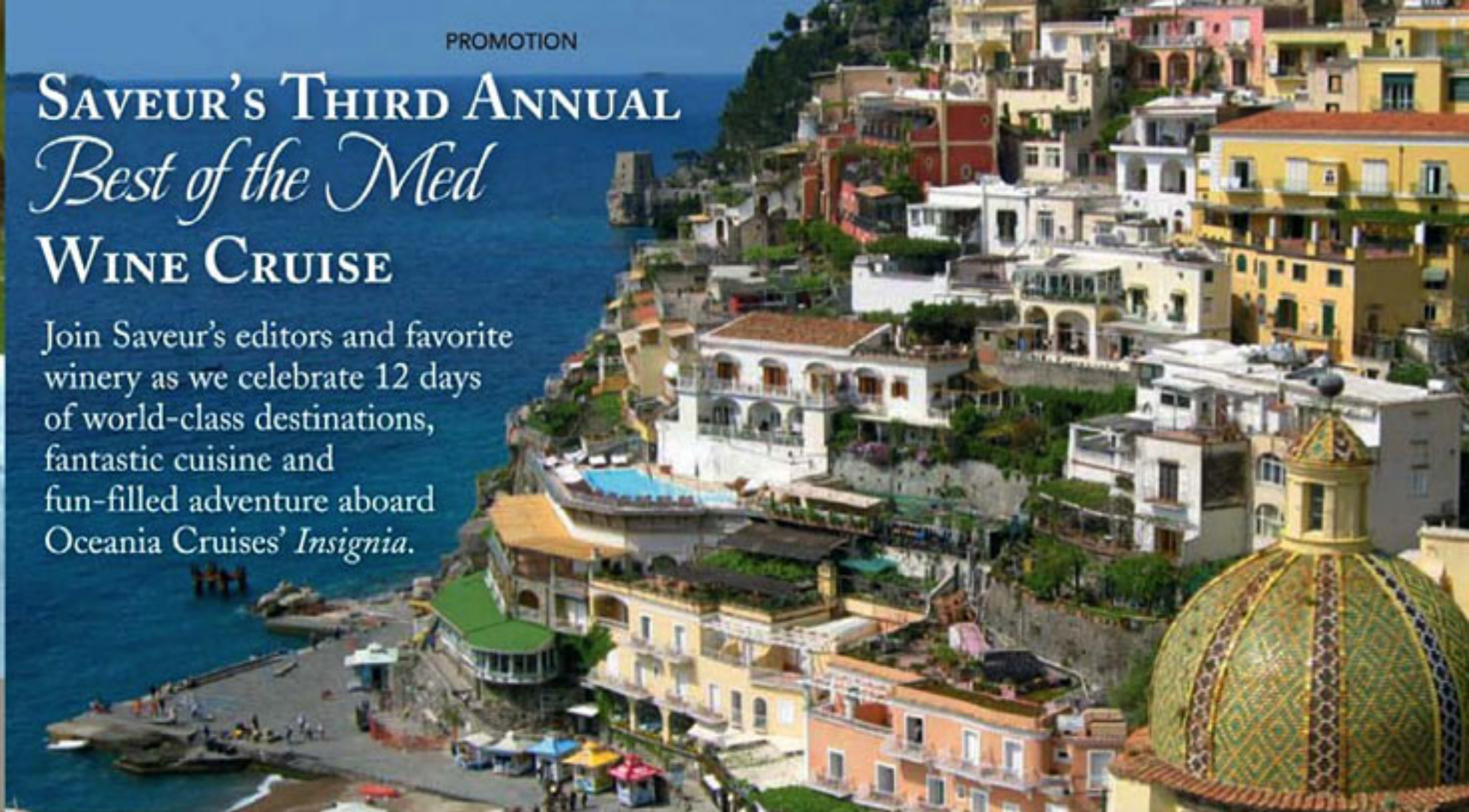


Hosted by:  
MICHAEL BEAULAC  
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